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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

BY

LILLIAN SABO

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION.

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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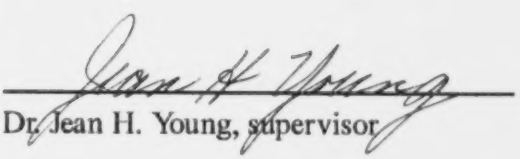

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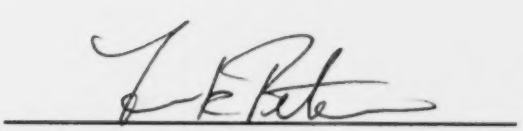

Dr. Frank Peters

September 11, 1992

DEDICATION

To my husband, Arthur;
my children, Brad and Lori; and
my extended family;
whose ongoing encouragement and support
sustained me throughout this project

ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to gain an understanding of principals' effective assistance with curriculum implementation as perceived by both principals and teachers. The study also investigated how the principal's roles and responsibilities influenced the ways in which the principal assisted with curriculum implementation.

The study sample consisted of the principals and twelve teachers in six elementary public schools in three jurisdictions. The schools were selected on the basis of containing grades K or one through six and having a principal with at least two years experience. Two teachers, who had permanent teaching certificates and had taught for at least two years in that school, were selected from each school.

The data for the study were generated by the critical incident technique. A structured interview schedule was used to collect information on incidents, provided by both principals and teachers, in which the principal's help was critical in implementing a curriculum.

Analysis of the gathered data indicated that principals were usually responders when assisting teachers with curriculum implementation. The principals helped teachers with curriculum problems after the teacher approached them requesting help. This is contrary to the pro-active stance advocated in the literature. In addition, although principals helped the individual teacher, principals often had a whole school outlook.

The principals' dominant role did not necessarily influence the ways in which principals assisted teachers with curriculum implementation. The critical incidents showed that, whether the principal's role priority was instructional leadership, management, or administration, the principals assisted teachers either by giving them the kind of help they wanted or by responding to teachers' general calls for help.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The role of the principal as an instructional leader is important for, according to the literature, principals who are strong instructional leaders are the key to effective schools. Many studies have attempted to describe how principals, as instructional leaders, successfully improve the quality of schools. "These principals know that it is their responsibility to create a strong culture, enabling teachers to collaborate with them in redesigning the instructional program so that all students can learn" (Cooper, 1989, p. 16).

As an instructional leader, the principal helps teachers deal with change. Educational change is a process of changing existing practices or beliefs of an individual or groups of individuals so that new ways of doing things are meaningful and satisfying (e.g.: Deal, 1984; Fullan, 1982, 1985; Leithwood & Begley, 1989).

One of those changes is curriculum change. We know that curriculum implementation requires change, and the principal is responsible for any change that takes place in the school. Therefore, a principal should be assisting with curriculum implementation. However, we do not know the ways in which principals as instructional leaders are facilitating curriculum implementation.

It is important to find out not only what principals do, but how teachers perceive what principals do. Many studies stress that the effectiveness of the principal is determined by teacher perceptions of the principal's abilities with respect to several tasks. According to Floden, Alford, Freeman, Irwin, Porter, Schmidt, and Schwille (1984), for example, one task is enlisting the teachers' assistance in contributing to student achievement. Another task is promoting a strong school culture or creating a shared meaning (e.g., Sergiovanni, 1984; Smith & Andrews, 1989). A third task is providing support and assistance to

teachers throughout program changes (Dawson, 1984; Fullan, 1982; Hord & Hall, 1987).

The literature indicates two primary areas for further research. First, more studies are needed which describe what principals actually do (Ginsberg, 1988; Miklos. 1983; Morris, Crowson, Hurwitz, & Porter-Gehrie, 1982). Second, studies of instructional leadership are also required, not as an isolated phenomenon, but within the context of the principal's other roles and responsibilities (Bredeson, 1985; Jordan, 1986; Murphy, 1987).

Therefore, this study was designed to investigate what principals do to facilitate curriculum implementation in elementary schools. The perceptions of principals and teachers are compared because the effectiveness of the principal as instructional leader is significantly determined by teacher perceptions of the principal's abilities with respect to providing support and assistance through program changes (Dawson, 1984; Fullan, 1982; Hord & Hall, 1987). It is hoped that the information gained from the study will yield valuable data for teachers, principals, policy makers, and theoreticians.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the principal's role in curriculum implementation as perceived by principals and teachers.

There are five main research questions:

1. What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that principals perceive as effective?
2. What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that teachers perceive as effective?
3. Is there congruence between principals' and teachers' perceptions of the assistance with implementation which principals give to teachers?

4. What factors are operating within a school that are related to the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation?
5. Is the principals' assistance with curriculum implementation related to their view of their other roles and responsibilities?

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions are used in this study.

Elementary school:

A school with students, usually aged 5 to 11 years, from Kindergarten or Grade One to Grade Six.

Curriculum:

A formal curriculum; i.e., a document produced and distributed to schools by a provincial department of education.

Curriculum implementation:

The process by which teachers use a formal curriculum as the basis for classroom instruction.

Research Design and Procedures

This section describes the sample, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations of this qualitative study.

Study Sample

The study sample consisted of the principals and selected teachers in six elementary public schools in three jurisdictions--two in St. Albert Protestant

District #6, two in County of Strathcona #20, and two in Edmonton School District #7. Using three jurisdictions eliminated the effect of policies or characteristics that were peculiar to one district (e.g., school-based budgeting in Edmonton School District #7).

Personnel at the office of the Superintendent/Area Superintendent of each jurisdiction were asked to identify all schools which met the following criteria.

1. Grades K or 1 through 6
2. A principal with at least two years experience in that school

Using a random numbers table, the researcher selected two schools from that list.

The participating principal of each school was asked to identify teachers who met the following two criteria.

1. A permanent teaching certificate
2. Employment in that school for at least two years

The principals either provided two names for the researcher to contact or set up appointments with two teachers who agreed to participate. In the latter instance, the principal confirmed the appointments with the researcher.

Data Collection

Data were collected primarily through the critical incident technique. During individual interviews, participants were asked to describe at least two incidents illustrating times when the principal was effective in facilitating curriculum implementation. For example, a principal was asked:

> *Can you describe a time in the last year or two when you believe you were very helpful to a teacher in implementing a new or revised curriculum?*

While the respondent was describing the incident, the researcher asked such probing questions as:

1. *How did the problem arise?*
2. *Why did you choose to help in that way?*
3. *Why did that type of assistance "work"?*
4. *Would you use the same method with other teachers?*

The critical incident technique was pilot tested with three people (one principal and two teachers) to determine the clarity of the questions and the time needed for the interview. Each of these interviews was audio-taped (upon permission and assurance of confidentiality) in order to refine the interview technique.

Study participants were interviewed at a pre-arranged time for no more than one hour. The researcher requested permission to audio-tape each interview, indicating that the names of the participants would be kept confidential. Tapes were letter-coded for schools involved (School A, B, C, etc.).

Upon completion of each interview, the researcher reflected upon and noted general impressions to assist with data analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involved listening to and taking notes from the tapes to obtain statements that answered the research questions. The researcher analyzed the data in two ways.

First, the data were analyzed separately for each school in order to answer the research questions. Each school was treated as a mini-case study to organize the data provided by the participants.

1. The principal's perceptions
2. The teachers' perceptions
3. Congruence between the principal's and teachers' perceptions

4. The characteristics of that school and their relationship to the was in which principals assist with curriculum implementation

Second, a comparison of the schools at the jurisdiction level identified factors operating at the school level which influenced the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation.

Third, the data from all schools were pooled in order to arrive at generalizations about the principals' assistance with curriculum implementation regardless of school. The researcher developed a number of tables which provided a summary of the findings. The tables enabled the researcher to develop categories and make appropriate generalizations.

On occasion the validity of the researcher's interpretations were confirmed by phoning the participant and discussing the interpretations with him/her.

Ethical Considerations

Since the interview technique was designed to be non-threatening and non-judgemental, the research has not caused physical or mental harm for the principals and teachers who participated in the study. As well, Superintendents/ Area Superintendents, principals, and teachers were told the purpose of the study: to investigate the principal's role in curriculum implementation as perceived by principals and teachers. Participants were able to withdraw from the study at any time, although no one chose to do so.

In order to protect the identity of the schools and the participants, codes were used and names changed to eliminate the possibility of tracing information to any particular individual or school. The researcher believes that this gave the respondents a sense of security concerning their involvement in the study.

Rather than solely taking information away from schools, the researcher intends to give something in return by distributing a report of study findings to

each respondent. The report may encourage principals and teachers to reflect upon alternate ways to facilitate curriculum implementation in their schools.

Scope of the Study

This study focused solely on elementary schools. Since secondary schools are organized differently (i.e., usually into subject-area departments with department heads), they were not included in the study.

Only six schools were chosen to participate in this exploratory study. This proved to be a sufficient number because, after completion of the interviews with eighteen respondents (one principal and two teachers from each of the six schools), much of the data had become repetitive.

Although this study focused solely on the role of the principal in curriculum implementation, the researcher attempted to describe the findings of the study in the context of the principal's other roles and responsibilities, as suggested by the literature review.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations must be recognized for this study.

1. Principals and teachers may have differed in their ability to recall and describe the incidents involving implementation problems and the assistance provided. When teachers could not identify such an incident, the researcher asked the teachers to respond to an incident raised by the principal.

2. The data were the result of a structured interview. One of the weaknesses of interviews as a data collection technique is the question of the researcher's interviewing skills and the problem of the accuracy of interpreting

the information provided by the respondents. The pilot study enabled the researcher to improve her ability to develop a rapport with respondents and to probe for valid responses.

3. Since the study sample consisted of a small number of elementary schools, the findings may not be generalizable to all elementary schools. However, the findings may be used to develop a measuring instrument for a broader survey of principals and teachers.

Significance of the Study

The study contributes to the fields of both Curriculum Studies and Educational Administration. It makes a theoretical contribution by adding to knowledge of curriculum implementation and the role of the principal as instructional leader. It also makes a practical contribution to principals by identifying forms of assistance with curriculum implementation which both principals and teachers find effective.

The findings of this study could also be valuable for policy makers regarding the role of the principal as instructional leader. They may suggest the need to clarify role definitions and provide principals with incentives to function according to their specific situations.

Organization of the Thesis

Chapter 1 has presented an introduction to this study of the principal's role in curriculum implementation as perceived by principals and teachers. Chapter 2 presents a review of literature on the principal as instructional leader and on educational change. Both areas of study have implications for the principal's role in curriculum implementation. Chapter 3 describes the design of the study,

including the development of the measuring instrument and the procedures used for data collection and data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study as they relate to the research questions. Chapter 5 includes a summary of the study and the conclusions drawn from the findings. Recommendations for the principal and further research are also provided.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the literature concerning the role of the principal in curriculum implementation. The chapter is divided into two major sections: the principal as instructional leader and educational change at the school level. A great deal has been written about each of these aspects. Therefore, only those items obviously related to the principal's role in curriculum implementation have been selected.

The Principal as Instructional Leader

The role of the principal as instructional leader currently dominates the literature. The writer will discuss the findings with regard to changes in the principal's role over time, the causes of these changes, and the current emphasis on instructional leadership. Furthermore, the various findings concerning the difficulties in studying the principal as instructional leader, the actions of the instructional leader, the factors that affect instructional leadership, and the effectiveness of the instructional leader will be presented. A discussion of the problems with existing research (as indicated by the literature) will also be provided.

Changes in the Principal's Role

Over the past 30 years, the principal's role has gone through three dominant phases: 1) administrator, 2) manager, and 3) instructional leader (Boyd & Crowson, 1981; Hewitt, 1988; Tymko, 1986).

As school administrator, the principal was basically inward-looking, that is, concerned solely with maintaining a well-run school. Daily routines were emphasized (Hewitt, 1988; Tymko, 1986). Although continuing to face inward, principals as managers "began to stress resources-oriented management in education. School administrators began to focus on instructional resources, special facilities, teacher specialists, and resource consuming activities and events; results were merely secondary" (Tymko, 1986, p. 55). With the emergence of principal as instructional leader, the principal became primarily concerned with student outcomes and enabling teachers to foster positive student results (Bosetti, 1986; Boyd & Crowson, 1981; Hewitt, 1988; Tymko, 1986).

Some of the literature indicates that these phases are distinct; that is, the principal's role was first one of administrator, then manager, and finally instructional leader (Hewitt, 1988; Tymko, 1986). Others, however, claim that the roles have not necessarily changed but, rather, each phase has become an add-on (Bosetti, 1986; Foster, 1989; Snyder & Johnson, 1984). The latter state that although there has been a shift in emphasis from traditional administration to instructional leadership, the principal is attempting to fill all three roles. According to Bosetti (1986) the principal is predominantly concerned with instructional leadership, but is also aware of the need for effective management.

Causes of the Changing Roles

Several factors contributed to the changes in the principal's role. Increasing skepticism and dissatisfaction with education called for a push for accountability

(McIntosh 1986; Tymko 1986). An attempt to balance and accommodate the increasing diversity in expectations of the province, school boards, teachers, parents, students, and community contributed greatly to changing the nature of the position (Bosetti, 1986; Flath, 1989; Ingram, 1986; McIntosh, 1986; Tymko, 1986). At the provincial level, an increase in curriculum changes created pressure upon the schools (Hewitt, 1988; Jones, 1986), while at the school level demands for diversity of programs to meet the needs and rights of students added further pressure (Flath, 1989). As a result, the most important outcome of schooling became student achievement (Snyder & Johnson, 1984). However, with accountability creating an "overcultivation of schooling as a management" (Tymko, 1986, p. 56), schools became business systems rather than educational, social systems (Bosetti, 1986; McIntosh, 1986; Tymko, 1986).

The need to provide a "unifying vision to special interest groups" (McIntosh, 1986, p. 47) called for a shift from building manager to instructional leader (Flath, 1989; Hewitt,1988; Leithwood, 1983; Snyder & Johnson, 1984). The problems of individual students and groups of students occur at the school level, not at the provincial level; therefore, the school became the fundamental unit of public education (Flath, 1989; McIntosh, 1986).

Current Role Emphasis

The literature includes both prescriptive and descriptive explanations of the variety of roles in which a principal may or may not be simultaneously involved. Currently, principals are expected to be everything to everyone (Allison, 1983; Griffin, 1988; Hallinger & Murphy, 1987; Mendez, 1987; McIntosh & Montgomerie, 1987; Montgomerie, McIntosh, & Mattson, 1987). According to their review of the literature, Montgomerie et al. (1987) state that "the role of the principal today is defined by complexity, multiplicity, ambiguity, and change" (p.5).

Several writers focus primarily on the leadership role of principals (e.g.: Brandt, 1987; Jordan, 1986; Mendez, 1987; Sergiovanni, 1982, 1984). Some focus primarily on the management role (Boyan, 1982; Foster, 1989; Morris, Crowson, Hurwitz, & Porter-Gehrie, 1982; Morris, Crowson, Porter-Gehrie, & Hurwitz, 1984). Others focus on both management and leadership (Alberta Education, 1985; Boyd & Crowson, 1981; Jones, 1986; Rallis, 1988; Ross, 1980; Smith & Andrews, 1989; Wilson & Rigby 1989); and there are those who focus on alternate roles which include different roles or a combination of and/or adaptation of any of the above (e.g.: Bredeson, 1985; Hord & Hall, 1987; Leithwood, 1983; Manasse, 1985; Montgomerie, McIntosh, & Mattson, 1987). As illustrated, principals can become involved in a wide variety of roles depending upon their situations. However, since the emphasis of this thesis will be on curriculum implementation, the writer shall narrow the focus to the role of the principal as instructional leader.

Difficulties in Studying Principal as Instructional Leader

While the researcher found the literature on the principal as instructional leader voluminous and intriguing, two inhibiting problems were encountered: 1) ambiguity of terms; and 2) lack of consensus.

Ambiguity of terms. Such terms as instructional leadership, educational leadership, instructional management, and instructional organization have been encountered in readings concerning the principal as instructional leader. According to Miklos (1983), educational leadership is a broad term meaning "working toward the implementation and improvement of educational programs in the school" (p. 3). He goes on to say that instructional leadership is the narrow term indicating the role of the principal in assisting teachers to improve

classroom techniques. Leithwood, Cousins and Smith's (1989) perception of instructional management is similar to Miklos' (1983) definition of instructional leadership. Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, and Lee (1982) discuss their view of the relationship between leadership and organization as important factors for instructional organization. Foster (1989), on the other hand, perceives instructional leadership as a task within human resource management roles, while Bryce (1983)indicates that, although working with teachers for program improvement is the principal's primary task, instructional organization also involves management tasks to support the primary task. According to Sergiovanni (1984), management and leadership are distinguished by the use of different forces. He defines force as "the strength or energy brought to bear on a situation to start or stop motion or change" (Sergiovanni, 1984, p.6). A competent manager uses technical forces (i.e., management techniques that are sound) and human forces (i.e., social and interpersonal skills). Excellent leaders use educational (i.e., expert knowledge involving educational and schooling matters), symbolic (i.e., focusing others' attention on matters important to the school) and cultural (i.e., building a distinctive school culture) forces as well. Educational, symbolic and cultural forces are seen as situational and contextual; therefore, they are necessary to bring about excellence in schooling.

Lack of consensus. Much of the literature on instructional leadership is in disagreement about whether principals, consultants, or teachers should be instructional leaders (Cooper, 1989; De Bevoise, 1984; Gersten, Carnine & Green, 1982; Rallis, 1988) and what it is the instructional leader actually does (Flath, 1989; Ginsberg, 1988; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Manasse, 1985; Ross, 1982). "If instructional leadership is defined as leadership that informs and guides teachers' decision making so that practice can mesh with policy, the logical instructional leaders are teachers" (Rallis, 1988, p. 643). Brandt (1987), however, states that "if teachers are leaders...we run the risk of creating a more bureaucratized form of governance and organization in elementary schools...that will diminish productivity and inhibit change" (p. 15). Therefore, since in much

of the literature the definitions of instructional leadership are broad and ambiguous (Ginsberg, 1988; Murphy, 1987), many differing opinions are evident. For example, De Bevoise (1984) "broadly interprets the concept of instructional leadership to encompass those actions that a principal takes, or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning" (p. 15). Jordan (1986), Snyder & Johnson (1984), and McIntosh (1986) provide similar definitions. As a result, such broad and vague definitions "allow all principals to tie their current behaviors to the letter of the definition, without worrying if they actually meet the spirit of the concept" (Ginsberg, 1988, p. 279). Therefore, "instructional leadership must be defined in terms of observable practices and behaviors that principals can implement" (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987, p.55).

Actions of the Instructional Leader

Although there is lack of consensus as to what instructional leaders do, researchers agree there is no one "fixed recipe" or "simple formula" for instructional leadership (Dwyer, 1984; Flath, 1989; Ginsberg, 1988; Jordan, 1986; Miklos, 1983). However, since each principal's situation is unique (Dwyer, 1984; Manasse, 1985), standardization of instructional leadership creates limitations and distorts the role (Cuban, 1986; De Bevoise, 1984; Foster, 1989; Miklos, 1983). Since there are limitless strategies and behaviors exhibited by strong instructional leaders (Jordan, 1986), it is important for principals to be aware of them so that the principals may "fit" those strategies to their own situations. To carry out the instructional leadership role, the principal sets school-wide goals which emphasize achievement; maintains necessary resources and ensures all other administrative tasks are completed; maintains an appropriate professional development program in accordance with school goals; establishes and communicates the school's vision which includes modelling important goals and behaviors that indicate what the schools values; is actively involved in the

improvement of classroom practices, thereby maintaining his/her general knowledge about the trends in each subject area; and provides a visible presence by interacting with all school members regularly, publicly rewarding staff and student accomplishments, making frequent classroom visitations and participating in professional development activities (e.g., De Bevoise, 1984; Hallinger & Murphy, 1987; Hord & Hall, 1987; Smith & Andrews, 1989).

Factors Affecting Instructional Leadership

Factors which have both positive and negative effects on the role of instructional leader can be grouped as follows: 1) factors within the principal; 2) factors within the school; and 3) factors outside the school.

Factors within the principal. One factor that affects the instructional leadership role is the principal's skills and training. Much of the literature indicates that principals are unprepared for the instructional aspect of their jobs. For example, Cuban (1986) argues that, as teachers, principals were trained to teach children and are unprepared to teach adults. Furthermore, during a principal's education, any type of curriculum courses are optional; therefore, principals cannot be expected to be curriculum experts (e.g.: Flath, 1989, Goodlad, 1979; Manasse, 1985; Murphy, 1987; Wilson & Rigby, 1989). In addition, assistant principals are rarely provided with the opportunity to experience the instructional leadership role since their task is usually discipline; therefore, their on-the-job experience is sadly lacking (Manasse, 1985; Smith & Andrews, 1989). Smith & Andrews (1989) provide a clinical supervision model which "works best when used on all levels of supervision--when the school board supports the superintendent's efforts and the superintendent devotes time and energy to supervise principals 'upclose'" (p. 128).

Another related factor is the satisfaction received from performing the instructional leadership role. Tasks that are crucial in instructional leadership

(long-range planning, assessment of needs, or curriculum implementation) do not provide immediate results and, therefore, may not be as gratifying or valued as those tasks that are easily recognizable and expected by school members (Bredeson, 1985; Goodlad, 1979; Murphy, 1987). "Since a manager is not expected to initiate change, many principals prefer the role of manager because they see it as safer and more comfortable than that of instructional leader" (Flath, 1989, citing Anderson & Lavid). However, those principals who have successfully performed the instructional leadership role and are perceived by others as strong instructional leaders value both their management and instructional leader roles (Jordan, 1986; Riffel, 1988; Smith & Andrews, 1989; Wilson & Rigby, 1989).

Factors within the school. Sergiovanni (1984) claims that students accomplish more and teachers work harder in schools that have a strong culture and a clear sense of purpose. While these schools are tightly structured, they also must provide opportunity for autonomy for teachers to work effectively (Deal & Celotti,1980; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Sergiovanni, 1984).

Many principals perceive that instructional leadership is the most crucial role in which to be involved. However, instructional leadership requires large blocks of uninterrupted time and commitment (Boyan, 1982; Boyd & Crowson, 1981; Bredeson, 1985; Smith & Andrews, 1989). "The principal has no time for being an educational leader. More and more responsibilities have been added to the role without any being taken away" (Fullan, 1982, p.134). The principal's day is characterized by a wide variety of unrelated tasks; therefore, small amounts of time are actually spent on instructional matters (e.g.: Boyan, 1982; Griffin, 1988; Leithwood, Cousins & Smith, 1989; Stronge, 1988). Strategies for balancing instructional and management tasks (for example, delegation of administrative tasks) are dealt with in different ways in different situations (e.g., Cooper, 1989; Dwyer, 1984; Foster, 1989; Manasse, 1985; Snyder & Johnson, 1984).

Furthermore, not all teachers view instructional leaders positively. Some teachers view the principal's presence in the classroom as a means of obtaining positive strokes (Smith & Andrews, 1989), while others view his/her presence negatively because of summative evaluations (Montgomerie et al., 1987). "Strong instructional leaders are able to spend less time on student matters because they work to improve the skills of all teachers...they prefer to counsel teachers rather than evaluate teachers out of teaching" (Smith & Andrews, 1989, p.35).

Factors outside the school. "The primary role of the school principal is as educational leader in the school and the local school community" (Alberta Education, 1985, p. 43). While principals are expected to be instructional leaders, there are limits imposed on them by policy makers (Allison, 1983; Bossert, et.al., 1982; Gunn, Holdaway, & Johnson, 1988; Murphy, 1987; Wilson & Rigby, 1989). Furthermore, while school districts expect principals to be instructional leaders, the school districts reward principals for their management abilities (Boyd, 1982; Manasse, 1985; Smith & Andrews, 1989). As well, when attempting to bring about curriculum changes, principals must be aware of the impact that special interest groups have on implementation (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982).

The Effectiveness of an Instructional Leader

The effectiveness of an instructional leader is evident in the perceptions of the teaching staff that the principal knows everything that is happening in their classrooms as well as in the school (Dwyer, 1984; Jordan, 1986). Since the teachers' perception of the principal's influence is crucial, it is important for the principal to communicate a clear vision of the school's goals. De Bevoise (1984), Sergiovanni (1984), and Smith & Andrews (1989) emphasize the importance of "purposing" or "creating meaning" (Braun, 1989) because "each task can be

carried out more easily if decisions and actions are based on shared meanings and a clear understanding of the school's overarching goals" (Braun, 1989, p. 24). Manasse (1985) claims that "vision, goal setting, or theory in action" (p. 446) assist principals in setting priorities so that the school can move forward--instructional leaders are not content to maintain the status quo (De Bevoise, 1984; Rutherford, 1985; Smith & Andrews, 1989). The effective instructional leader achieves the school's vision by carefully coordinating the curriculum (Manasse, 1985). (S)he uses a wide range of strategies to enlist teachers' assistance in contributing to student achievement on the one hand (Floden et al., 1984) while supporting and sustaining them through the necessary program changes on the other (Dawson, 1984; Fullan, 1982; Hord & Hall, 1987).

Concerns with Research

Much of the literature to date is prescriptive rather than descriptive (i.e., there is more information concerning what the principals should be doing as opposed to what they are actually doing in the schools); therefore, studies describing what principals are doing in their specific situations are needed (Miklos, 1983; Morris, et. al., 1982; Jordan, 1986). "It is unclear, for example, how expectations should be set by principals, what kinds of skills should be emphasized for pupils, and what balance between teacher autonomy and strong leadership is proper" (Ginsberg, 1988, p. 286).

According to Zirkel & Greenwood (1987) "there is a glaring absence of multivariate, longitudinal research designed for inferences about causation" (p. 262). Therefore, policy makers are cautioned about creating false expectations of principals based upon incomplete research.

Furthermore, there is still a need to examine the relationship between student achievement and instructional leadership "...in order that more useful guidance can be given to principals, concerning the aspects of their jobs which

'make a difference'" (Jordan, 1986, p. 174). Observations of principals throughout a school year may reveal different patterns of role emphasis (Boyd & Crowson, 1981; Dwyer, 1984; Smith & Andrews, 1989); therefore, research needs to be done at different times of the year "to document who attempts (how extensively and by what means) to systematically influence the instructional program and with what effects" (Boyd & Crowson, 1981, p.339).

Since instructional leadership has been proposed as an isolated phenomenon, it has been over-simplified by its supporters; therefore, instructional leadership should be examined within the context of other roles and responsibilities in which the principal is involved (Bredeson, 1985; Jordan, 1986; Murphy, 1987).

Summary

The findings from the literature are summarized as follows.

1. The role of the principal currently emphasizes instructional leadership due to the shift of instructional decision making from the district level to the school level.
2. How the principal carries out the role of instructional leader depends upon his/her specific situation.
3. There are several factors which affect instructional leadership as enacted by principals.
   a. Certain factors are inherent in the personality of the principal.
      i) The degree of satisfaction received
      ii) The extent of the principal's skills and training
   b. Certain factors are needed within the school.
      i) A strong school culture
      ii) Balance between tight structure and teacher autonomy
      iii) Uninterrupted blocks of time for the principal to carry out the role

c. Certain factors have impact on the school from outside.

i) Policies set by policy makers such as provincial departments of education or central offices

ii) View of the principal's role as promoted by superintendents

iii) The impact of special interest groups on curriculum implementation (e.g., languages, mainstreaming handicapped)

4. The effectiveness of the principal as instructional leader is determined by teacher perceptions of the principal's abilities with respect to the following tasks.

a. Enlisting teacher assistance in contributing to student achievement

b.Promoting a strong school culture (creating shared meaning)

c. Providing support and assistance to teachers through program changes

5. When studying the principal as instructional leader, consistent use of terms and clear, specific definitions which describe observable practices and behaviors are required.

6. There is a lack of consensus as to whether principals, consultants, or teachers should be the instructional leaders. Determining what instructional leaders should do depends upon each situation.

7. Rather than obtaining a brief list of standardized tasks, principals need to be aware of limitless strategies and behaviors exhibited by strong instructional leaders so that they may "fit" these strategies to their unique situations.

8. The concerns with research are:

a) the need for more studies describing what principals actually do;

b) an absence of multivariate, longitudinal studies which are needed to make inferences about causes;

c) the need for comparative analysis to determine patterns of role emphasis at various times during the school year;

d) an examination of instructional leadership, not solely as an isolated phenomenon, but within the context of other roles and responsibilities

the principal fills.

Educational Change at the School Level

As stated in the previous section, one of the responsibilities of the principal as instructional leader is to provide support and assistance to teachers regarding program change. Curriculum implementation implies change. Since the principal is responsible for the school, (s)he plays a major role in this process. Therefore, this section of the literature review will be on change at the school level. A discussion of the meaning of change, perspectives on change, and influences on change follows.

The Meaning of Change

Rather than present the many different definitions of change that exist in the literature, the writer shall describe the common elements that occur in these definitions. Educational change is a process, rather than an event. It involves altering an established practice or belief of an individual or organization so that there is meaning and satisfaction in the new ways of doing things (e.g., Deal, 1984; Fullan, 1982, 1985; Leithwood & Begley, 1989). Within the literature, terms such as "innovation", "reform", "implementation", and "adoption" are used to indicate that some type of change has taken place.

Perspectives on Change

Over time, three different perspectives have emerged to interpret the dynamics of change: 1) technological; 2) political; and 3) cultural (Deal, 1984;

Firestone & Corbett, 1988; House, 1981).

Technological perspective. This view describes implementation of change as a technical task based on economic concerns with efficiency (of production) as a primary value (Firestone & Corbett, 1988; House, 1981). According to Clark (cited by Firestone & Corbett, 1988, p. 323) the technological perspective is also subject to rational analysis; however, "change is rarely a rational process". Therefore, the technological perspective disregards the complexity of implementation.

Political perspective. The primary concern in this perspective is the authority system and legitimate distribution of resources through negotiation (House, 1981). Since divergent individual interests are often in conflict (Firestone & Corbett, 1988), the change effort is rarely successful--"the champions of status quo usually emerge victorious" (Deal, 1984, p.127). The limitations to rationality of individuals, as emphasized in the technological perspective, is clarified by careful consideration of balances of power and incentives of interest groups in the political perspective (Firestone & Corbett, 1988).

Cultural perspective. The emphasis in this perspective is community--"people are bound to one another through shared meanings rested on shared values" (House, 1981, p.19). Firestone & Corbett (1988) indicate that the cultural perspective "reinterprets divergent interests as the result of differences stemming from enduring values and cognitions of those involved in change processes" (p.323). Core values of school are maintained by symbolic elements, such as rituals (enacting of values), ceremonies (occasions for display of culture), and stories (personify values) (Deal, 1984; Sergiovanni, 1984). This normative core of the school's culture is perpetuated by the heroes and heroines (role models) who sustain, as well as stabilize and strengthen, the existing culture (Deal, 1984; Papalewis,1988; Rossman, Corbett & Firestone, 1988).

Although some researchers claim that the current emphasis should be on the cultural perspective on change (House, 1981; Rossman, Corbett, & Firestone,

1988), others indicate that each perspective on change highlights an important aspect of the organization (Bates, 1987; Crandall, Eiseman, & Louis, 1986; Deal, 1984). Crandall, et al. (1986) illustrate by the following:

> For example, problems of pedagogy and curriculum are primarily technical because they address the school's core structures and activities; the problem of adjudicating between the collective bargaining agreement and the demands of implementing a new program is primarily political; and the problem of motivating a 'burned out' staff is primarily cultural (p.32).

Therefore, principals concerned with change should consider a "multi-perspective" approach to fully understand the dynamics of an organization (i.e., the school).

Influences on Change

Although a wide variety of factors affect change, the writer shall focus on the influences within the school which are in keeping with the principal's leadership role. The factors that influence change at the school level are as follows: 1) participants' attitude toward change; 2) school culture; 3) teacher participation; and, 4) the principal's style.

Participants' attitude towards change. Being aware of and planning for participants' attitude toward change assists the principal in successful implementation. Several aspects should be considered. First of all, participants must be aware that there is an actual need for the change and must perceive the change as relevant (Fullan, 1982, 1985; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Rosenblum & Louis, 1981). For example, "curriculum work was also perceived as useful when it alleviated teachers' frustrations with the programmes they were currently using in their classrooms" (Young, 1989, p.371). Therefore, school committees grew out of the teachers' need to perhaps solve problems that arose when teachers were dealing with change.

Secondly, a clear understanding of what the change effort involves enables the participants to more willingly accomplish more of the change (Firestone & Corbett, 1988; Fullan, 1982, 1985; Rosenblum & Louis, 1981). For example, goals should be stated in clear, simple, and concrete terms so that they are effectively implemented (Lieberman, 1982; Leithwood & Fullan, 1984).

Thirdly, the change must be perceived as complex enough to be worthwhile (Fullan, 1982). This refers to the difficulty of change as well the extent of change required. If the change is extremely difficult (e.g., a different philosophy), those responsible for implementation must consider several factors. First of all, relatively complex changes require more time and effort with regards to learning new skills through ongoing practice and feedback (Fullan, 1982, 1985; Gross, Giacquinta, & Bernstein, 1975). Maintaining perspective on the amount of time needed, during which ongoing assistance and support is provided, is crucial (Fullan, 1985; Huberman & Miles, 1984). For example, considerable time and energy is required for teachers to learn and incorporate new practices into their existing repertoires (Joyce & Weil, 1986). This suggests that the change process should be incremental and developmental, allowing the participants to cope with uncertainties and anxieties (Fullan, 1985; Lieberman & Miller, 1981). Another consideration with regards to time is that the innovation should not be terminated solely on the basis of the lengthy start-up time that may be required (Huberman & Miles, 1984).

School culture. School culture is defined as the informal environment or climate of the school where patterns of norms, beliefs, and values describe the way things are and prescribe the way people should act in a given situation (Erickson, 1987; Papalewis, 1988; Rossman, et al., 1988; Saphier & King, 1985; Sergiovanni, 1984). School culture is an important aspect for the principal to consider when dealing with educational change because of the impact school culture has on daily as well as occasional occurrences within the school.

Culture influences change by specifying ways students, teachers, and administrators should interact with one another and specifying the means and

ends to be achieved through appropriate instruction (Erickson, 1987; Rossman, et al., 1988; Saphier & King, 1985). If the change attempt does not fit with the school's existing culture, this change may be resisted (Corbett, Firestone, & Rossman, 1987; Papalewis, 1988; Rossman et al., 1988). Furthermore, the dominant school culture is not necessarily ascribed to by every participant; divergent subcultures may exist, creating added conflict throughout a change (Erickson, 1987; Hopkirk & Newton, 1986; Rossman, et al., 1988).

According to Peters and Waterman (1982), an organization's culture creates a sense of valued purpose which provides a perceived sense of security for the participants. This perceived sense of security can also be applied to schools as one of the reasons for success in implementation (Papalewis, 1988). However, in seeking security, many participants may become "too willing to yield to authority, and in providing meaning through rigidly held beliefs, others are all too willing to exert power" (Peters & Waterman, 1982, p.78). Bates (1987) extends this further through claims that the intent of "corporate culture" is manipulative imposition which is instrumental rather than educative. When being educative the "goal is to enlighten people about how they can change their lives so that, having arrived at a new understanding, they may reduce their suffering by creating another way of life that is more fulfilling" (Fay, 1977, p.204). Therefore, the principal ensures that curriculum is successfully implemented not for personal recognition, but so that teachers and students could develop a better understanding of their world.

When considering school goals, the school finds it easier to move toward the goals it wishes to pursue, if the school's culture is understood, acceptable and cohesive (Corbett, et al., 1987; Sergiovanni, 1984; Wilson & Corbett, 1983; Wilson & Firestone, 1987). However, the stronger a school's culture is, the more it is possible that change attempts will face serious problems--maintaining the status quo becomes an issue (Rossman, et al., 1988). According to Corbett, Firestone and Rossman (1987) initiators "must understand how the culture will

accept the proposed innovation and where the culture itself needs modifications" (p.57).

Teacher participation. Curriculum is implemented in the classrooms by the teachers; therefore, teacher participation has a direct impact on successful implementation.

According to Lieberman (1982), "school improvement projects are aimed at the total school where teachers feel less connected and less in charge" (p.252). Therefore, empowering teachers with the responsibility for decision making enables them to effectively implement changes with regard to their specific situations (Sickler, 1988). "The commitment of teachers increases as they simultaneously see themselves master the practice and perceive that their students are doing better" (Crandall, Eiseman & Louis, 1986, p.34). If a new curriculum addresses issues that teachers feel are important, they are more likely to be committed to working on it (Crandall et al., 1986; Dawson, 1984; Ross 1980). For example, teachers are motivated to work on school curriculum committees by their desire to participate in decision making which have impact on their classrooms (Young, 1990b).

Conway (1984), however, argues that participation is not a necessary condition for change nor does it necessarily improve the quality of the decision. In addition, Silberstein & Ben-Peretz (1987) found that rather than teachers being participants in the development of their own materials, curriculum developers expected teachers to act as choice makers. Therefore, initiators must keep in mind several factors with regard to participation. First of all, if teachers are going to participate in the decision making process, they must feel that their input influences the final decision (Duke, Showers & Imber, 1980). Furthermore, too much participation can detract rather than contribute to the situation (Conway, 1984; Hoy & Miskel, 1987). Another point to keep in mind is that satisfaction with involvement in decision making depends upon the type of decision as well as the degree of involvement (Conway, 1984; Hoy & Miskel, 1987).

Teachers may work together, rather than in isolation, to solve related classroom and school problems. For example, Young's (1990b) findings illustrate that professional growth as well as interaction with each other (as mentioned above) provide teachers with a source of satisfaction with participation in curriculum development at the school level. Collegiality among staff members is created--one that increases the level of professional performance within the school (Champlin, 1987; Rosenblum & Louis, 1981; Young, 1990a). Furthermore, Champlin (1987) claims increased participation in decision making creates a new bond between principals and teachers.

If, however, there is too much interaction, teachers become frustrated with other teachers who cause slow and inefficient committee work (Young, 1990b). Also, indirectly related, "it does not necessarily follow that good ideas developed by a small group of teachers will spread throughout the school" (Crandall et al., 1986, p.29). That is, teachers do not always accept something new solely on the basis of fellow teachers working on the development. Fullan (1982) cautions that "change is a highly personal experience--each and every one of the teachers who will be affected by change must have the opportunity to work through this experience in a way in which rewards at least equal cost" (p.113).

Teachers often feel that the time taken for participation is too valuable and can be more beneficially used for what they perceive as more important tasks (Duke, Showers & Imber, 1980). Teacher dissatisfactions with participation in committee work are as follows: not being given release time (Young, 1988, 1990b); frustrations with inefficiency of the work (Young, 1990b); and incomplete work (Young, 1990a). This is in keeping with other findings that indicate that lack of time is a deterrent to participation (e.g., Crandall, et al, 1986; Duke, Showers, & Imber, 1980; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Sickler, 1988).

The principal's style. Since the role of the principal as instructional leader has been discussed in the previous section, the influence of the principal's style shall be limited to that of instructional leader.

The principal as instructional leader positively influences change by providing a supportive environment for teachers (Lieberman, 1982). "Most users achieve greater success when they are provided with opportunities to observe, to ask questions--not only prior to implementation, but also throughout the implementation process--and also to practice and receive feedback on key skills" (Crandall et al., 1986, p.41). Therefore, the principal would insure that teachers are supported either by the principal or others (other teachers, assistant principal or consultants) (Fullan, 1982, 1985; Glickman, 1987; Hord & Hall, 1987; Rosenblum & Louis, 1981; Saphier & King, 1985). According to Floden, Alford, Irwin, Schmidt and Schwille (1984), principals influence teachers' content decisions; however, the methods used to teach that content are entirely the teacher's choice.

Along with the provision of support, pressure is also necessary (Fullan, 1982; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Leithwood & Fullan, 1984; Miskel, 1977). According to Leithwood and Fullan (1984), gradual pressure achieved through interaction of participants is also necessary to ensure implementation success--"it is not an imposed pressure, mandated by authority" (p.7).

A great deal of time is needed to plan, implement and institutionalize a significant change (e.g., Crandall, et al., 1986; Leithwood & Fullan, 1984; Manasse, 1985). Principals "are already busy and rarely in a position to delegate or drop some of their responsibilities while they take on new ones" (Crandall, et al., 1986, p.42). In addition, principals must value the change or they will not take an active part in fostering the process (act as instructional leaders) (Leithwood & Begley, 1989).

Summary

The findings from the literature are summarized as follows:

1. Educational change is a process of changing existing practices or beliefs of an individual or groups of individuals so that new ways of doing things are meaningful and satisfying.
2. Although the dynamics of organizational change have been described first through technological, then political, and finally through cultural perspectives, a multi-perspective approach to change is recommended.
3. As the instructional leader, the principal must be aware of several influences on change at the school level.
   a. Influence #1:

      Participants must be aware of the need for change, perceive that the change is relevant, have a clear understanding of the change effort, and perceive the change as complex enough to be worthwhile.

   b. Influence #2:

      School culture can have both positive and negative influences on change.

      i) School culture has a positive influence when it:
         - specifies standards of behavior and achievement;
         - creates meaning or a sense of purpose;
         - results in cohesiveness which provides impetus for achievement of goals.

      ii) School culture has a negative influence when it: - allows conflicts to arise between subcultures;
         - becomes predominantly instrumental rather than educative;
         - struggles to maintain the status quo.

   c. Influence #3:

      Teacher participation in decision making is important for change. Teachers will participate in attempts to solve problems that directly

affect their classrooms, especially when they observe positive results.

i) Benefit: professional growth develops through increased collegiality among staff members, resulting from continuing interaction.

ii) Drawback: too much interaction and over-involvement in decision making causes frustration with inefficient use of time and energy.

d. Influence #4:

The principal as instructional leader provides a supportive, guiding environment for necessary change. However, (s)he requires time for planning, implementation and institutionalization.

Implications for This Study

We know from the literature that principals are required to function as instructional leaders which includes guiding and supporting teachers with their implementation of new curricula. We also know that curriculum implementation deals with change, and the principal is responsible for any change that takes place in the school. However, we do not know in what ways principals as instructional leaders are facilitating curriculum implementation.

The literature indicates two primary areas for further research. First, more studies are needed which describe what principals actually do (Ginsberg, 1988; Miklos, 1983; Morris, Crowson, Hurwitz, & Porter-Gehrie, 1982). Second, studies of instructional leadership are also required, not as isolated phenomena, but within the context of the principal's other roles and responsibilities (Bredeson, 1985; Jordan, 1986; Murphy, 1987). Therefore, an investigation of what principals are actually doing to facilitate curriculum implementation in elementary schools should yield valuable data for teachers, principals, policy makers, and theoreticians.

CHAPTER 3

THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

As noted in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study is to investigate the principal's role in curriculum implementation as perceived by principals and teachers. There are five main research questions.

1. What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that principals perceive as effective?
2. What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that teachers perceive as effective?
3. Is there congruence between principals' and teachers' perceptions of the assistance with implementation which principals give to teachers?
4. What factors are operating within a school that are related to the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation?
5. Is the principals' assistance with curriculum implementation related to their view of their other roles and responsibilities?

This chapter presents the research design which was selected to answer these questions. In particular, the chapter describes the methodology and the development of the measuring instrument. The researcher also reports on the pilot study, the selection and description of the study sample, and the methods used to analyze the data.

Methodology

In order to generate data which would increase our understanding of this topic, a structured interview was selected as the method of investigation. The interview was chosen as the primary source of data for several reasons. First of

all, the interview was judged to be the most appropriate technique for collecting data of a personal nature. It is "used to get descriptive data in the subject's own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of their world" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 135).

Second, the research in education supports the use of the interview "to test hypotheses or to suggest new ones; or as an explanatory device to help identify variables and relationships" (Cohen & Manion, 1980, p. 243). The interview enables the investigator to request explanations of complex information (Fink & Kosecoff, 1985; Galfo, 1983).

Finally, the interview was selected because it provides a controlled and systematic method of obtaining information from a number of principals and teachers. It is controlled in that only specific items are discussed, and systematic in that an interview schedule is developed and the interview is conducted in an orderly manner. As a result, the interview provides data from various respondents that can be classified and compared.

However, the researcher was also aware of the interview's disadvantages as a research tool (Cohen & Manion, 1980; Fowler, 1984; Galfo, 1983). For example, respondents may express viewpoints they believe will impress the interviewer; the dynamics between the interviewer and respondent may alter the responses; and the wording or selection of questions can bias data. With these potential problems in mind, the researcher carefully developed the interview schedule and conducted a pilot study.

The literature discusses several kinds of interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Cohen & Manion, 1980). For the purposes of this study, it was decided that the structured interview was the most suitable type of interview to gather data. In this way, the interviewer adhered to the sequence and wording of the interview schedule in order to obtain uniformity of measuring and greater reliability. However, at the same time, it was decided to incorporate a degree of flexibility (through the use of probing questions) when called for by particular responses or situations.

Furthermore, it was decided that the structured interview would collect data in the form of critical incidents. This procedure asks respondents to speak about incidents which are important to them rather than globally. This seemed appropriate for this study for two reasons. First of all, this procedure is suitable for an exploratory study since the kinds of assistance that principals and teachers perceive as helpful were unknown. Second, the incidents would focus on the thinking of real people in real situations. "The critical incident technique is essentially a procedure for gathering important facts concerning behavior in defined situations" (Flanagan, 1954, p. 335). Several studies in education used critical incidents to analyze individuals' behaviors (Boyd, 1989; Schwartz, Ronan, Carroll, & Baskett, 1976; Sergiovanni, 1969). For the purpose underlying this study, critical incidents are those incidents in which the principal's help was critical in bringing about substantive change in a teacher's classroom. In other words, without that principal's help, the curriculum could not have been implemented as well.

During individual interviews, participants were asked to describe at least two incidents illustrating times when the principal was effective in facilitating curriculum implementation. For example, a principal was asked:

Can you describe a time in the last year or two when you believe you were very helpful to a teacher in implementing a new or revised curriculum?

While the respondent was describing the incident, the researcher asked such probing questions as:

1. *How did the problem arise?*
2. *Why did you choose to help in that way?*
3. *Why did that type of assistance "work"?*
4. *Would you use the same method with other teachers?*

Development of the Measuring Instrument

The instrument used to conduct the research was an interview schedule. The interview schedule was developed through various stages which are described in detail as follows.

The Interview Schedule

Since both principals and teachers were to be interviewed, one interview schedule was designed for principals and a similar interview schedule was designed for teachers. The principals' interview schedule was designed to gather data that would identify the principals' perceptions of effective assistance with curriculum implementation, to reveal the factors operating within a school that are related to the principals' assistance, and to clarify the ways in which the principals' assistance with curriculum implementation is related to their views of their other roles and responsibilities. (See Appendix A.)

The teachers' interview schedule was similarly designed to gather data that would identify the teachers' perceptions of effective assistance with curriculum implementation and to provide insight into teachers' views regarding ways in which the principals' assistance with curriculum implementation is related to the principals' other roles and responsibilities. (See Appendix B.)

The questions in both interview schedules were organized into major sections to accomplish these objectives. The principals' interview schedule consisted of: the school demographics (characteristics of the students, characteristics of the school staff, and description of the principal); the principal's roles; and the critical incidents. The teachers' interview schedule consisted of: teacher background information; the critical incidents; and the principal's roles.

In developing the questions for the interviews, the researcher kept in mind the following guidelines suggested in the literature on educational research (Cohen & Manion, 1980; Fowler, 1984).

1. More valid answers are provided from specific rather than general questions.

2. In order for all participants to receive the same meaning, questions must be carefully prepared.

3. Careful consideration must be given to the selection of vocabulary, uniform wording, and the sequencing of questions in order to avoid leading questions or eliciting distorted responses.

The questions comprising the first three sections of the principals' interview schedule focused on factors operating within a school which may be related to the principals' assistance with curriculum implementation, the kinds of assistance that principals give to teachers that principals perceive as effective, and the relationship between the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation and their perceptions of their other roles. The first draft of these questions was guided by the related research questions and knowledge based on the literature.

The thesis supervisor was asked to examine the interview schedule for clarity in wording, order of items, and appropriateness of questions to the study. After the follow-up discussion, the following modifications were made in the interview schedule.

1. More specific lead-in questions were formulated to focus on curriculum implementation.

2. The wording of some of the questions was changed in an attempt to remove any possible evaluative tone about a principal's performance in relation to assistance with curriculum implementation. A sentence similar to "Do you observe and help when you believe that it is needed or do you wait until help is requested from teachers?" was replaced with a series of questions beginning with something like "I would like you to think about a time when you believe you

were very helpful to an individual teacher or group of teachers who were having problems with implementing a new or revised curriculum."

3. Possible probing questions were incorporated with the major interview questions. The probing questions would be adjusted according to the responses provided by the participants.

4. It was decided to develop cards (Appendix C) for the respondents to refer to regarding the definitions of the three major roles: 1) instructional leadership; 2) management; and 3) administration. The purpose of these cards was to ensure that the interviewer and respondents were clear on the meaning of the roles as used in this study.

5. A Time Spent/Degree of Importance response form (Appendix D) was developed to determine the principal's priority with regard to the major role performed and its relationship to curriculum implementation.

6. Some questions were deleted, some were added and others modified to ensure that the questions would specifically elicit information related to curriculum implementation. Also, a question was added near the end of the interview to tie together the two major sections of the interview. This question was used to determine how the principal's role priority influences the ways in which principals help teachers with curriculum implementation.

The Pilot Study

he pilot study was conducted in two phases. The first phase involved the testing of the principals' interview schedule and the second phase involved the testing of the teachers' interview schedule. The purposes for the pilot study were:

1. to determine whether the interview schedules were valid for gathering data to answer the research questions;

2. to identify any problems related to the interpretation or clarity of wording in the interview schedules;

3. to develop the researcher's interviewing skills; and

4. to establish the amount of time needed to conduct the interview.

Phase 1. The principals' interview schedule was administered to three elementary school principals. The researcher chose two principals whom she knew personally in order to experience interviewing in a relaxed atmosphere. She also interviewed a third principal (a graduate student at the University) whom she had not previously met in order to attempt to develop a rapport with a stranger. Two of the principals chose to have the interviewer conduct the interview in their offices during the school day. The other principal preferred to do the interview at the University in a study area. In all cases the interview was conducted in a quiet area without interruptions. Each of the participants agreed to have the sessions recorded on a tape recorder. This allowed the researcher to summarize the interviews and to analyze her interaction with the principals.

At the conclusion of the interviews the principals were asked to comment on the general clarity of the questions and the length of the interview. They were also given the opportunity to indicate whether or not they felt the definitions regarding the principal's roles were clear and evaluate the Time Spent/Degree of Importance response form.

As a result of this phase of the pilot study the following changes were made in the principals' interview schedule.

1. It was decided to eliminate several questions in the initial part of the interview which asked whether specific factors regarding the school influenced curriculum implementation. This decision was based on the fact that the principals indicated they had no relation to curriculum implementation.

2. Follow-up questions were included in the interview schedule which addressed the principal's responses to the Time Spent/Degree of Importance response form. The principals indicated a need to discuss their reactions. Furthermore, this would enable the researcher to verbally verify the participants'

responses.

3. Several of the words and/or phrases were unclear to the principals. For example, a question regarding "new teachers" was changed to "teachers on staff new to this school." The word "personnel " was changed to "fulltime classroom teachers." "Curriculum implementation " needed a specific definition. Therefore, a definition was provided early in the interview.

4. Definitions for the principal's roles--instructional leadership, management, and administration--were modified to more clear, concise statements with distinct supporting examples.

5. The process used to explore the three major principal's roles required modification. Initially the interviewer presented the definition cards along with the Time Spent/Degree of Importance response form to the participant. Following input from the principals and the thesis advisor, the interviewer read the definition of each role, requested another example for clarification, and provided the definition card for easy referral. The response form was then presented after the roles had been briefly discussed.

Prior to the pilot study the researcher had been concerned about the length of the interview schedule. However, the participants indicated that the interview had not been too lengthy. The principals were very willing to discuss how they had assisted teachers with curriculum implementation and how their other roles had influenced their assistance.

Phase 2. Following the completion of the modifications to the principals' interview schedule, the researcher designed the teachers' interview schedule. The nature of this schedule was very similar to the principals' interview schedule to maintain as much consistency as possible between the two groups. The thesis supervisor was asked to examine the interview schedule for consistency between the two schedules and clarity of the perspective of the schedule (from the teachers' viewpoint) in leading and probing questions. After discussion three modifications were made.

1. Several demographic questions regarding the teacher's background were included to provide the researcher with relevant information to adequately probe during the interview.

2. The wording of the lead-in questions related to assistance were changed to remove an evaluative tone about problems teachers may have with implementation. The focus was changed from problems teachers have to ways the principal has helped with curriculum implementation. A sentence such as "I would like to talk about some of the problems that you have had with implementation and the ways your principal has helped you with them." was replaced with "I would like to talk about how your principal has helped you with curriculum implementation."

3. The order of two of the major interview questions were changed to allow for a more commonsense flow to the interview.

The second phase of the pilot study included three teachers whom the researcher knew personally. Two teachers chose to have the interviewer conduct the interview in school after regular school hours. The other teacher preferred to do the interview during the weekend at her home. As with the principals, the interviews were conducted in a quiet area without interruptions. Each of the teachers agreed to have the interviews recorded which allowed the researcher to further analyze her interactions with the participants.

At the conclusion of the interview the teachers were asked to comment on the clarity of the questions and the length of the interview. The teachers indicated that the interview was comprehensive and clear. However, one teacher had worked with a principal whom she believed had not helped her with curriculum implementation. She indicated that she could not answer the questions as they were asked.

As a result of this pilot study no changes were made in the interview schedule. However, the researcher added an addendum to be used if the need arose. An alternate set of critical incident questions were formulated to be used with teachers who had problems implementing curricula but indicated they did

not receive help from the principal. (See Appendix E.)

Data Collection Procedure

The data for this study were collected in each school, first with the principal and then with the two teachers, individually using the interview schedules. The purpose of completing the interviews in one school before going on to the next was to allow for continuity of information from respondents in a particular school. The following sections provide a detailed description of the procedures that were used during the investigation.

Selection of the Schools

The study sample included the principals and two selected teachers in six elementary public schools in three jurisdictions--two in St. Albert Protestant District #6, two in County of Strathcona #20, and two in Edmonton School District #7. These districts were selected because they were large enough to randomly select schools that were strictly elementary schools with grades kindergarten or one to six. Many of the schools in smaller districts are difficult to compare because of grade differences, e.g., some contain grades one to four, some contain grades one to seven, others one to twelve, and so on. Three jurisdictions, rather than one, were chosen in order to eliminate the effect of policies or characteristics that are peculiar to one district (e.g., school-based budgeting in Edmonton School District #7).

The Superintendent/Area Superintendent of each jurisdiction was contacted and asked to identify all schools which met the following criteria.

1. Grades K or 1 through 6
2. A principal with at least two years experience in that school

The researcher judged that two years was sufficient time for principals to be familiar with how their school operated, with the teachers who taught at that school, and with their jobs as principals. The researcher randomly selected two schools from that list using a table of random numbers.

Initial Contact with the Respondents

The researcher wrote to the principal of each school, describing her study and inviting the principal to participate in the study. About one week later the researcher determined through a follow-up phone call whether or not the principal was willing to participate. The purpose of the study was reviewed and the principal was informed about the major topics that would be dealt with during the interview. An estimate was also provided of the time that would be required for the interview. Upon the principal's agreement, an appointment was scheduled indicating the date, time, and place of the interview. During this phone conversation the principal was asked to identify teachers who met the following two criteria and would be willing to participate in the study.

1. A permanent teaching certificate
2. Employment in that school for at least two years

The principals requested time to discuss the study with the teachers with the intention of selecting those teachers who volunteered to participate.

Some principals phoned back providing the names of teachers who agreed to participate, while other principals provided the teachers' names at the conclusion of the principal's interview. The researcher phoned the teachers who volunteered to participate in the study and confirmed that she or he was willing to take part in the study. The researcher also reviewed the purpose of the study and informed the teachers of the major topics that would be dealt with through the interview. The researcher provided an estimate of the amount of time

required for the interview and established a time for conducting the interview.

The Interview

All of the interviews for this study took place between the months of February and June 1991. The interviews were conducted with the principals during the day at the schools in which the principals worked. The teachers' interviews were also conducted in their schools, either during the school day or after school hours.

In each school the researcher first interviewed the principal, then returned to interview each of the two selected teachers. In the four schools where the teachers were interviewed on the same day, the researcher allowed at least a half-hour interval between interviews in order to least a half-hour interval between interviews in order to write her impressions regarding the previous interview.

In nearly every instance the interview was conducted in a quiet room which provided for an uninterrupted session. Only in one case did interruptions occur when the principal was occasionally called out to attend to crises. In other schools minor interruptions were caused by school-wide intercom announcements. The length of the interviews varied depending on the degree to which the participant explained particular viewpoints. The majority of the principals' interviews ranged from forty-five minutes to one hour and fifteen minutes. The teachers' interviews ranged from forty minutes to one hour.

An introduction of approximately ten minutes began each interview session. During this time the researcher attempted to develop a comfortable rapport with the respondent. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), the development of rapport allows for a feeling of trust so that participants willingly share a part of themselves. A brief discussion of the participant's day and description of the researcher's own teaching background was provided before beginning the interview. Also, the researcher attempted to assure the respondent that the

interviews were based on his or her perceptions and that all information shared was important to the study.

Before beginning the questions on the interview schedule, the researcher requested permission to tape record the interview so that it could be later summarized. The principals and teachers were assured that the tapes and resulting summaries would be dealt with confidentially and that anonymity was guaranteed.

The interview questions were read to the principals and teachers following the order of the interview schedule. Probing questions were asked whenever the researcher was unclear about the meaning of a response or when a response seemed incomplete.

When the researcher requested responses concerning the role of the principal, the process of providing definition cards during the interview proved to be helpful. The principals and teachers were given each definition card as the interviewer explained that role. The researcher asked the respondents to give another example of each definition to check their understanding of the definitions. They referred to the definition cards while they were completing the Time Spent/Degree of Importance response form. In some cases the respondents requested that the tape recorder be turned off while they were completing the form because they were uncomfortable with the silence. The tape was turned on again as soon as discussion resumed.

Principals' and teachers' overall reactions to the interview were positive. Following each session, many participants indicated they enjoyed the interview and commented how the questions brought to their consciousness the complexity of principal's roles.

After each interview was completed, the researcher reflected upon and noted general impressions that could be used to assist with data analysis. The principal's interview (or a teacher's) was usually the only interview in that school for the day; therefore, the researcher wrote her notes concerning her impressions in her car. When two teachers were interviewed on the same day at that school,

the half hour interval allowed for enough time to note general impressions of the first teacher's interview. This writing took place in a quiet location of the school, usually in the staffroom.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis involved listening to and taking notes from the tapes to obtain statements that answered the research questions. The researcher analyzed the data in two ways.

First, the data were analyzed separately for each school in order to answer the research questions. Each school was treated as a mini-case study to organize the data provided by the participants.

1. The principal's perceptions
2. The teachers' perceptions
3. The congruence between the principal's and teachers' perceptions
4. The characteristics of that school and their relationship to the principal's assistance

Second, a comparison of the schools at the jurisdiction level identified factors operating at the school level which influenced the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation.

Third, the data from all schools were pooled in order to arrive at generalizations about the principals' assistance with curriculum implementation regardless of school. The researcher developed a number of tables which provided a summary of the findings. The tables enabled the researcher to develop categories and make appropriate generalizations.

On occasion the validity of the researcher's interpretations were confirmed by phoning the participant and discussing the interpretations with him/her.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW DATA

This chapter examines the perceptions of principals and teachers concerning the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation. There are five sections which correspond to the research questions. These sections are: 1) principals' perceptions of effective assistance; 2) teachers' perceptions of effective assistance; 3) congruence between the principals' and teachers' perceptions; 4) related factors operating within a school; and 5) the principals' assistance related to their view of their role.

Throughout these sections, whole or partial incidents are described to exemplify the findings. The incidents are drawn from the researcher's summaries of each school and do not indicate direct quotations of the respondents.

The Principals' Perceptions of Effective Assistance

The first research question raised in this study is as follows.

> What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that principals perceive as effective?

The answers to this question are contained in the following sections. It begins with the types of curriculum problems that the principals identified and continues with the types of assistance that principals provided to help teachers with those problems.

Types of Curriculum Implementation Problems

At the beginning of the interviews, the researcher told the participants that, in this study, curriculum implementation is defined as using the Alberta Education Program of Studies in the classroom. The principals were asked to relate two incidents in which they thought they had provided effective assistance to teachers who were having problems with the implementation of new or revised curricula.

The implementation problems identified by the principals can be grouped into three categories: 1) interpretation problems; 2) methodology problems; and 3) problems with materials. The data are summarized in Table 1 which shows the categories just mentioned. Each of these three categories is divided into two sub-categories: 1) separate subject; and 2) general. "Separate subject" means that the problem arose in a specific subject area such as art or health, while "general" means that the problem crossed subject area boundaries. An example of a general problem would be teaching research skills. Each of these two sub-categories is further divided into two areas: 1) school; and 2) teacher. "School" means that the problem was experienced by the staff as a whole, while "teacher" means that the problem was experienced by individual teacher(s). The X's show an occurrence of a particular problem described by the principal of a certain school. Note that for each school the principal described two incidents; therefore, two X's for each school are recorded in the table.

Each of the main categories is described in the following sections. Within each category, excerpts from the researcher's notes are used to exemplify the findings. Note that the names used in the researcher's notes are fictitious names to preserve the anonymity of the participants.

Interpretation problems. An interpretation problem is one which involves understanding a document which others wrote. Table 1 shows that only one interpretation problem was reported by the principals. In that school:

Table 1

Types of Curriculum Implementation Problems

(Principals)

SCHOOL #	INTERPRETATION				METHODOLOGY				MATERIALS			
	Separate Subject		General		Separate Subject		General		Separate Subject		General	
	School	Teacher	School	Teacher	School	Teacher	School	Teacher	School	Teacher	School	Teacher
1								X	X			
2						X		X				
3						X X						
4	X				X							
5					X				X			
6							X X					

> The problem the teachers were having was implementing the art curriculum. Dora (the principal) knew there was a problem because after the teachers read the new curriculum document they told Dora they did not understand what they were to teach. She thinks the teachers were having this problem because the curriculum was vague. Dora believes that, since many teachers lack expertise in art, the curriculum should be written in such a way that people who don't know how to "do art" can understand how to teach it.

This problem, which involved one particular separate subject, was experienced by the staff as a whole (see Table 1).

Methodology problems. A methodology problem is one which stems from a lack of technical skills or knowledge needed to accomplish an objective. The highest number of problems fell into this category.

One type of methodology problem occurred in a separate subject and was experienced by the staff as a whole. For example:

> The problem the teachers had was dealing with the personal safety (sexual abuse) section of the health curriculum. Dora knew there was a problem because of the principal-initiated discussions of the upcoming curriculum at several staff meetings. She thought that the teachers had this problem because they wondered how they would cope with the delicate, societal issues that were involved. They had no idea how personal safety would be handled, what kinds of materials were available, what expectations were held by the people who developed the program, and how the parents would respond.

A second type of methodology problem also involved a separate subject but was experienced by individual teachers. For example:

> One of the grade two teachers was having a problem implementing the language arts curriculum. Anne discovered there was a problem in two ways. First, when she arrived at the school (Anne's first year in this school) she reviewed all the students' records and became concerned with the large number of grade two students who could not read. Second, the grade two teacher approached Anne explaining that she had thirteen students (seven

had already repeated) in her class who were non-readers and requested help. According to Anne, the teacher had a problem implementing the grade two language arts curriculum because so many of her students were not ready for it.

A third type of methodology problem involved a problem of a general nature which was experienced by the staff as a whole. For example:

According to Daryl, cooperative learning was being implemented on a district-wide basis. The district offered inservices, which the teachers from Daryl's school had attended (with his encouragement). However, in Daryl's view, the teachers returned frustrated, indicating that these inservices were not specific to their own grade-levels. Therefore, they approached Daryl, requesting help on how to implement cooperative learning in their own classrooms. Daryl believed that the teachers wanted to develop some units and specific lesson plans illustrating how to use cooperative learning in their own classrooms.

The fourth type of methodology problem also involved a problem of a general nature but was experienced by individual teachers. For example:

The Grade Two teachers were having a problem teaching research skills to their students. They approached Fran asking her if she would come into their classes and help them teach research skills. Fran believed that they were having this problem because many teachers do not focus on teaching research skills--other parts of the curriculum are usually more of a priority to them.

Table 1 shows that an almost equal number of methodology problems were encountered by individual teachers as by the staff as a whole. According to the principals, individual teachers experienced methodology problems when they were unfamiliar with the subject or when they believed their students were not ready for the suggested curriculum. The principals also believed that methodology problems experienced by the staff as a whole arose either from

teachers being unsure of the expectations of the developers or from teachers wanting to modify a curriculum they believed was mediocre. It is interesting that the principals viewed this as a methodology problem rather than as an interpretation problem.

Materials problems. A materials problem is one where the lack of materials causes a curriculum implementation problem. As shown in Table 1, there were only two materials problems, and both involved a separate subject and were experienced by the staff as a whole. In one school the problem was experienced as follows.

> Since the social studies curriculum was distributed before the materials were supplied, all of the teachers had a problem implementing the curriculum without grade-appropriate materials. Fran knew this was a problem for the teachers because they raised it at a staff meeting.

Another school experienced the problem in this way.

> The teachers had a problem implementing the social studies curriculum because the teachers were dissatisfied with the suggested materials. Steve knew this was a problem because the teachers discussed it at a staff meeting.

In both schools the subject area involved was social studies. However, the basis for the problem was different. One principal believed that distribution of the curriculum guide before the suggested materials were available caused the problem, whereas the other principal believed that the teachers had a problem because they were dissatisfied with the suggested materials.

The incidents described by the principals indicated that the teachers approached the principal with a curriculum implementation problem. The principals did not relate any incidents showing that they had encountered any problems with curriculum implementation while observing teachers in their

classrooms.

Conclusions Related to Types of Curriculum Implementation Problems

Several conclusions were drawn regarding the types of curriculum implementation problems described by principals in their critical incidents.

1. The teachers had three kinds of problems: 1) interpretation problems; 2) methodology problems; and 3) materials problems.

2. The principals had to deal more often with methodology problems than with interpretation or materials problems.

3. More problems applied to the staff as a whole than to individual teachers. The interpretation and materials problems applied only to the staff as a whole, while the methodology problems applied to both individual teachers and the staff as a whole.

4. The problems were drawn to the principals' attention by the teachers. The principals did not mention a more proactive stance such as identifying problems through classroom observations.

Types of Effective Assistance

During the interviews, the principals described how they assisted teachers with curriculum implementation problems. The researcher found that all of the principals were responders rather than initiators. In other words, the principals responded to the teachers' calls for help rather than recognizing the problems before the teachers drew them to the principals' attention. The following example from the researcher's notes illustrates this.

> The teachers who taught combined classes (Grade 4/5 and Grade 5/6) were having a problem implementing the social studies curriculum. According to Brenda, the teachers were unsure about how to teach combined classes without repeating some units or omitting others. Both teachers approached her and discussed their concerns with her. Brenda believes the teachers were having a problem because they were anxious about ensuring that all the students complete the suggested units before they had to write the provincial exams in grade six.

In another school the teachers requested help in this way.

> The teachers were having a problem implementing the health curriculum. Steve knew there was a problem because, after the teachers read the new curriculum document, they told him they did not like the basic format of the self-esteem section (suggestions on how it was to be taught). He believed the teachers were having this problem because the suggestions provided were mediocre and the teachers wanted something better.

In both of these examples, as in the other schools, the teachers were drawing the principals' attention to the problems they were having with implementing curriculum. Therefore, the principals were responding to the teachers' request for assistance.

However, in some instances the principals responded to teachers' specific requests and in others they responded to general requests. That is, when a teacher asked for a certain kind of help, the principal provided that help because it was what the teacher wanted. However, sometimes the principal would add further help as (s)he saw fit. For example:

> A special education teacher was unsure if he was implementing the special education program effectively. He approached the principal, asking if he could observe a special education teacher at another school. Although Brenda assured him that he was doing a good job, he claimed he needed to observe a different approach.

Brenda helped in three ways. First, she provided the teacher with release time to observe another teacher. Second, she brought in a supply teacher so that the special education teacher could test his students to determine where they were in the curriculum. Third, she suggested ways the teacher could individualize the program rather than teaching the students as a whole group.

Brenda identified two reasons for helping in this way. First, she believes teachers recognize that she values something highly when she puts money into it. Second, in her view, teachers need to take time away from the classroom to focus on their problems, share them with others, and learn from others.

Brenda said the teacher responded very well to her help. She believed the problem was solved because the teacher is more comfortable with his class and what he is doing. According to Brenda, help works more effectively if it is the kind of help teachers want. She stated that this teacher took ownership of the situation by requesting the kind of help he thought he needed. As a result, Brenda's role in assisting teachers with curriculum implementation was to provide the approval and support that teachers need to grow.

In other instances, the teachers approached the principal for help but left it up to the principal as to the type of assistance provided. That is, the teacher indicated (s)he had a problem but did not specify the type of help preferred.

Table 2 summarizes the types of assistance that principals believed were effective in responding to specific requests. Table 2 shows that, in response to teachers' specific requests, principals encouraged teachers to attend inservices and/or invited in consultants; were available to listen or to provide suggestions; approved purchases of materials; provided release time; taught in classroom; and performed formative evaluations. In other words, the principals helped in the ways that the teachers wanted.

The X's represent the times principals provided a type of assistance. There are more than two X's for each school because some principals provided more than one type of assistance for each incident. Also, some principals provided the same type of assistance for different incidents. In this case, two X's are

Table 2
Types of Effective Assistance:
Response to Specific Requests
(Principals)

SCHOOL #	Encourages inservices and/or invites consultants	Is available to listen or to provide suggestions	Approves purchases of materials	Provides release time	Teaches in classroom	Performs formative evaluations
1	X	X	X	X		
2	X	X	X X		X X	X
3						
4	X	X	X X			
5	X	X	X			
6			X		X	

displayed in the same category for the same principal.

The following example, from the researcher's notes,illustrates the principal assisting by providing the specific kind of help the teachers requested.

> The Grade Two teachers were having a problem teaching research skills to their students. They approached Fran asking her if she would come into their classes and help them teach research skills. Fran believed that they were having this problem because many teachers do not focus on teaching research skills--other parts of the curriculum are usually more of a priority to them.
>
> Fran helped by teaching research skills to both Grade Two classes. She worked with half of a class at a time, while the teacher worked with the other half. She found that she could work with only half of the class at a time because of the limited amount of materials at the grade two level. She planned a unit for the research project, taught the unit, and informed the teachers on the content of the unit and method of instruction. The teachers did not observe Fran teaching as they were working with the remainder of their class on something else. However, they have since used Fran's unit as a model for other research projects.
>
> Fran identified two reasons for helping in this way. First, the school does not have a much-needed teacher-librarian. Second, Fran enjoys working with the students and getting to know them. She explained that she is not assigned any teaching time. Therefore, she requests teachers to give her time to work with students. She has taught library skills to classes at different grade levels and meets with students on a weekly basis during Author's Chair (students of different grade levels read their writing to her at this time).
>
> In Fran's view, the teachers responded very well to her working with the students since the children developed good final products. She believed the problem was solved because teachers have used that unit with other research projects. According to Fran, working directly with the students helped because the teachers were assured that students were provided with necessary research instruction. Furthermore, teachers are provided with a model for future use. Fran believed that teachers do not have the time to plan and teach research skills because of other demanding curriculum requirements. She indicated that she has also taught research skills to Grade Six students and keeps getting requests from teachers to work with students. As a result, Fran's role in assisting with curriculum

> implementation was to teach the students as the resource person (teacher-librarian) the school was lacking.

In this incident the principal provided the specific kind of assistance that the teachers requested. That is, the teachers informed the principal of the problem and also suggested the kind of help they believed would remedy the situation.

Table 3 summarizes the types of effective assistance principals provided in response to general requests. In these cases, the teacher(s) informed the principal of the problem they were having implementing a curriculum but did not ask for specific types of help. This required the principal to arrive at solutions on her or his own.

The X's represent the types of assistance principals provided in response to general requests for help. There are X's representing only two schools in this table because only two principals described incidents requiring responses to general requests. Also note that each of those principals provided more than one type of assistance for each incident described. Therefore, there are more than two X's for each of the two principals. The following example shows the principal providing assistance to a teacher who informed the principal of a problem she was having but did not indicate the type of assistance she preferred.

> One of the Grade Six teachers was having a problem implementing the dance section of the physical education curriculum. This teacher approached the principal explaining that she did not know how she was going to meet the time requirements for dance as stated in the curriculum. Anne believes the teacher was having a problem because this was the first time the teacher had taught physical education and she had no physical education background. Anne explained that she discourages too much specialization amongst teachers. Anne believed that students benefit from having one teacher who knows their needs and, therefore, requests that teachers avoid trading classes if possible.

Table 3
Types of Effective Assistance:
Response to General Requests
(Principals)

SCHOOL #	Initiates school projects	Arranges school inservices	Arranges grade–group meetings	Develops or identifies programs	Models in classroom	Locates funds
1						
2						
3	X	X	X	X	X	
4						
5	X	X	X	X		X
6						

Anne helped in two ways. First, she placed the dance concern as an item on the staff meeting agenda and requested that the Grade Six teacher bring up the problem at the up-coming staff meeting. Since sufficient time was not available to completely solve the problem at the staff meeting, this discussion continued at the following Monday morning grade-group meeting. Each Monday morning for half-an-hour the teachers meet to plan while the principal, assistant principal and, occassionally, the music teacher have all the students in the gymnasium for assembly. At this time teachers meet and plan in small groups (usually grade groups), addressing an issue of mutual concern. Secondly, Anne explained that she also helped by arranging three after-school workshops on dance for those teachers who wished to attend.

In Anne's view, she chose to help initially by placing the problem as an item on the staff-meeting agenda because she saw it as an opportunity to involve all the grade levels. Upon looking at all the teachers' long range plans she discovered that all the teachers needed to increase the amount of time dance was to be taught in physical education. Anne viewed this as a whole school curriculum concern rather than a grade concern. Secondly, Anne provided the after school inservices because she knew some good people who were available to do them.

Anne believed that the teachers responded very well to becoming involved with developing ways to increase time spent on dance and to the workshops provided. With the ideas received from the workshops, the Grade Six teacher and the music teacher, assisted by other teachers, developed a program for integrating some parts of the music and dance curricula. In this way the time requirements were met for both curricula, and the problem was satisfactorily solved.

According to Anne, encouraging teachers to collaborate at regular meetings and providing inservices was helpful because teachers need time and the opportunity to work through their problems and share information. In Anne's view, teachers celebrate what they have learned by sharing ideas at staff meetings and grade-group meetings. According to her, teachers willingly share as long as they get recognition for the ideas they have obtained. For example, a series of binders placed in the staffroom contain ideas from inservices brought back by teachers.

Anne would help in the same way with other curricula and any other teachers because, in her view, teachers need to believe that they are part of the solution. As a result, Anne's role in assisting teachers with curriculum implementation was to encourage and provide teachers with opportunities

to collaborate.

In this incident, the teacher informed the principal of the problem she was having implementing a particular section of the curriculum. However, the teacher did not indicate the kind of assistance she preferred. Therefore, the principal derived an interesting solution. Instead of providing assistance solely to the teacher who had the difficulty, the principal involved all the teachers in the school to encourage them to work together on a problem that was common to all of them.

Tables 2 and 3 show that whether responding to a specific or a general call for help principals assisted teachers by means of a variety of strategies. For example, if a teacher asked for funds to purchase suggested materials, principals usually approved the purchase. This could be considered as a one-time, quick fix solution. On the other hand, principals also provided assistance through ongoing strategies that required regular follow-up. For example, one principal initiated a project that involved locating a new program, inservicing the teachers, arranging grade-group meetings, and locating necessary funds.

Conclusions Related to Types of Effective Assistance

The conclusions drawn from the critical incidents concerning the principals' perceptions of effective assistance are as follows.

1. The principals were responders rather than initiators. The principals waited for teachers to approach them with their implementation problems and then the principals provided the assistance. The principals did not mention a more proactive stance such as identifying problems with curriculum implementation encountered through classroom observations.

2. There were more requests for specific kinds of help than for general assistance. The principals believed that they provided effective assistance with

curriculum implementation by responding to both kinds of requests.

3. When a teacher asked for a specific type of assistance, principals gave that kind of help to that individual. The teachers frequently asked for the following types of assistance which the principals provided: encouraging teachers to attend district inservices, being available to teachers, and approving purchases of materials. Teachers less frequently asked for principals to assist by teaching in the classroom, providing release time, and providing formative evaluations. Sometimes principals also responded by adding ideas of their own. For example, materials problems were usually solved by one-time, quick-fix solutions, such as approving funds for the purchase of materials and encouraging teachers to attend district inservices.

4. When the solution was left up to the principals, they usually provided assistance that applied to the whole staff. The principals believed they were offering effective assistance more often when they: initiated school-wide projects, arranged school inservices, arranged grade-group meetings, and identified or developed student programs. Such solutions were required for most methodology and interpretation problems. On some occasions principals also modelled in the classroom and located extra funds. The principals took individual problems and put them into a school context.

Discussion Related to the Conclusions

The researcher found the conclusions to be thought-provoking in several ways. While some of the conclusions are consistent with the literature, others are not.

One finding that is consistent with the literature is that, when a curriculum change takes place, different types of problems arise. According to Fullan (1987), changes in learning materials, in teaching practices, and in beliefs or understandings may be caused by a curriculum change. Furthermore, changes

in materials are easier to understand and contend with because they are concrete and tangible, whereas changes in practices and beliefs are more difficult to understand and contend with because they involve the development of new ways of doing and thinking about things. This could explain why interpretation problems were the least frequently described by the principals. Problems with materials are more tangible and, therefore, are easier to deal with. It is interesting to note, however, that while the problems may have involved individual teachers, the solutions were frequently placed into a school context.

The incidents described by the principals indicated that they perceived giving teachers the kind of assistance they want as effective. Principals are providing teachers the support to implement teachers' own solutions. "While the principal can have a major impact on implementation, there is considerable research that he or she frequently does not in fact play an active role" (Fullan, 1991, p.76). The incidents provided by the principals implied that the principals viewed the teachers as competent professionals. Therefore, most principals usually waited for teachers to approach them rather than impose their own solutions upon the teachers. When teachers approached them with open-ended requests for help, the principals would arrive at their own solutions which usually involved the school as a whole.

This leads us to another finding, which is consistent with the literature, that several principals could be concerned about establishing an atmosphere in which professionals can work together. Lieberman (1986) indicates that "... the more people work together, the more we have the possibility of better understanding these complex problems and acting on them in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect" (p.6). The interview notes further revealed that some principals go out of their way to promote a positive atmosphere by doing such things as being available to teachers and establishing regular meetings to encourage teachers to work together. This frequently occurred when teachers left the solution for an implementation problem up to the principals. Principals would sometimes help just that teacher, but often would include the staff as a whole.

According to Rosenholtz (1989), "Norms of collaboration don't simply happen. They do not spring spontaneously out of teachers' mutual respect and concern for each other. Rather principals seem to structure them in the workplace by offering ongoing invitations for substantive decision-making and faculty interaction" (p.44). Therefore, the idea that principals utilize curriculum problems as a catalyst for teacher collaboration underlies the finding that principals assist teachers with curriculum implementation by suggesting, for example, that a teacher raise a curriculum problem at a staff meeting. In one instance, this enabled the staff as a whole to work on the curriculum problem collaboratively to identify ways to increase the time required for the dance section of the physical education curriculum.

Another finding of this study that is consistent with the literature is that some principals see curriculum problems as complex, requiring solutions to be worked on in collaboration with teachers. Rosenholtz (1989) pointed out that, as well as encouraging helping behaviors, principals in collaborative settings "trust teachers' creative instincts as much--if not more--than their own" (p.61). During the interviews many of the principals indicated that teachers have different methods and different strengths; therefore, principals would rather work with teachers to arrive at a workable solution than impose their methods upon teachers.

Furthermore, the principals discouraged teacher isolation by working with groups of teachers or enabling teachers to work together more so than assisting teachers on a one-to-one basis. This finding demonstrates agreement with the results of other studies that focus on school culture and teacher empowerment. Fullan (1991), Lieberman (1986), Rosenholtz (1989), Rubin (1987), and Sergiovanni(1987) found that principals empower teachers by sharing responsibilities with them, thereby increasing teachers' sense of professionalism, rather than attempting to control them. Lieberman (1986), in describing a change effort, refers to collaboration regarding a curriculum problem where "principals and teachers learned the curriculum together which provided yet

another form of collaboration that ensured teachers would be supported in implementing the redesigned curriculum" (p.8).

However, there are also findings that are not consistent with the literature. Recent studies found in the literature indicate that principals should willingly make themselves available to teachers in order to improve schools (Fullan, 1991; Rosenholtz, 1989). "Principals from collaborative schools seem to set themselves apart from others by their everyday accessibility and their involvement in classroom affairs. And perhaps because they ubiquitously monitor instructional matter, they find greater opportunity to render technical assistance" (Rosenholtz, 1989, p.58). Interview responses revealed that although the principals made themselves available to the teachers, they did not view classroom visits as a means of uncovering curriculum implementation problems. The principals did not ferret out the problems themselves; instead they waited for the teachers to approach them. Furthermore, very few principals were directly involved in classroom affairs. The principals did not discuss incidents that involved observing in classrooms. This suggests that the principals may perceive that their various roles are in conflict. Such an hypothesis concurs with the results of Lee's (1991) research on instructional leadership as sense-making. She found that expecting the principal to perform both facilitator/supporter and evaluator tasks "is likely to create confusion and conflict about that person's role; such difficulty, in turn, influences how effectively the tasks can be performed" (Lee, 1991, p. 84).

Another inconsistency with the literature involves the finding that principals assist teachers with curriculum implementation through a variety of strategies ranging from one-time, quick-fix solutions to a series of ongoing techniques that requires regular follow-up. According to Fullan (1987):

> Once-only workshops, pre-implementation training without follow-up, professional isolationism of teachers, constant top-down policy making which stifles or does not stimulate professional learning, formal courses unconnected to the job and to real life of the organization have little or no impact because they are not designed to provide conditions for ongoing,

> interactive, cumulative learning necessary to develop or evolve new skills, behaviors and conceptions in practice (p.215).

However, the findings of this study show that many principals still provide quick-fix assistance by encouraging teachers to attend district inservices which are usually 'once-only workshops'. Some principals, however, did empower teachers to collaboratively search for solutions to their problems by providing teachers with necessary release time to attend grade-group meetings.

The Teachers' Perceptions of Effective Assistance

The second research question underlying this study is as follows.

> What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that teachers perceive as effective?

The answers to this question are contained in the following section. It begins with the types of implementation problems that the teachers identified and continues with the types of assistance provided by principals that teachers found effective. Throughout this section, whole or partial incidents are described to exemplify the findings. The incidents were drawn from the researcher's summaries of each school and do not indicate direct quotations of the respondents.

Types of Curriculum Implementation Problems

At the beginning of the interviews, the researcher told the participants that, in this study, curriculum implementation is defined as using the Alberta Education Program of Studies in the classroom. The teachers were asked to

relate two incidents in which they thought the principal provided effective assistance when they had problems implementing new or revised curricula.

The implementation problems identified by the teachers can be grouped into three categories: 1) interpretation problems; 2) methodology problems; and 3) problems with materials. The data are summarized in Table 4 which show the categories just mentioned, as well as a category for teachers who reported having no problems.

Each of the four categories is sub-divided into two categories: 1) separate subject; and 2) general. As noted in the section on the principals, "separate subject" means that the problem arose in a specific subject area as art or health, while "general" means that the problem crossed subject area boundaries. An example of a problems in the general category would be teaching research skills. Each of these sub-categories is further divided into two areas: 1) school; and 2) teacher. "School" indicates that the problem was experienced by the staff as a whole, while "teacher" means that the problem was experienced by an individual teacher.

The X's show an occurrence of a particular problem described by the teachers of a certain school. Note that for each school, there are two teachers who participated in the study. Each teacher is represented with two X's indicating the description of two types of problems or no problem, whichever the case may be. In the case where a teacher indicated that (s)he had no further problems implementing curricula, an "R" or a "C" has been slotted in the appropriate category. The R shows that instead of identifying a problem, the teachers responded to a curriculum problem which the researcher said that the principal had reported. The C shows that instead of identifying a problem or responding to a problem reported by the principal, the teacher commented on a problem experienced by other teachers (discussed further later). Note that the teachers in School #6 each reported only one incident concerning curriculum implementation problems, whereas the teachers of the other schools each reported two incidents.

Table 4
Types of Curriculum Implementation Problems
(Teachers)

SCHOOL #	INTERPRETATION				METHODOLOGY				MATERIALS				NO PROBLEMS			
	Separate Subject		General		Separate Subject		General		Separate Subject		General		Separate Subject		General	
	Sch.	Tch.	Sch.	Tch.	Sch.	Tch.	Sch.	Tch.	Sch.	Tch.	Sch.	Tch.	Sch.	Tch.	Sch.	Tch.
1: T.1						X				X						
T.2						X			X							
2: T.1					X				X							
T.2						X				X						
3: T.1		X								X						
T.2						X X										
4: T.1	R							X						X		
T.2						X				R				X		
5: T.1						X				X						
T.2					C				C					X X		
6: T.1								X						X		
T.2							X							X		

Each of the types of problems that teachers identified is described in the following sections. Note that the names used in the researcher's notes are fictitious names.

Interpretation problems. An interpretation problem is one which involves understanding a document which others wrote. Table 4 shows that only one interpretation problem was reported by the teachers (another teacher responded to an interpretation problem reported by her principal). In that school:

> Karen was having a problem implementing the art curriculum because she believed the terminology used was too difficult to understand. She approached the principal and explained how the terminology made the curriculum appear to be overwhelming. According to Karen, the principal's door is always open. There frequently appears to be someone (usually a teacher) in the principal's office because people feel comfortable with her.

This problem, which involved one particular separate subject, was experienced by an individual teacher (see Table 4).

Methodology problems. A methodology problem is one which stems from a lack of technical skills or knowledge needed to accomplish an objective. Table 4 shows that the methodology problems were of four different types.

One type of methodology problem occurred in a separate subject and was experienced by the staff as a whole.

> According to Tom, the principal initiated a discussion concerning the health curriculum at their staff meeting. She indicated to the teachers that she felt that they should focus on pro-social skills because of the number of discipline problems they had in their school. The teachers agreed that teaching pro-social skills would be beneficial to their classrooms and the school, but they needed more information on how to implement this aspect of the curriculum.

A second type also involved a separate subject but were experienced by individual teachers.

Carol was having a problem discovering how to set up and use a math lab. She explained that she did not have the knowledge to instruct grade six math through the use of manipulatives. In her view, using a math lab to instruct math through the use of manipulatives is necessary for the implementation of the imminent math curriculum. She and another teacher approached the principal requesting if they could set up a math lab in the school. They also explained that they needed to learn techniques on the use of manipulatives for math instruction.

A third type of methodology problem involved a problem of a general nature which was experienced by the staff as a whole. For example:

According to Clara, the district invited teachers to attend inservices on cooperative learning. She said that the district provided substitute teachers for the classrooms. She believed that the district introduced cooperative learning well, but the information provided at the inservice was too broad. They had not had the opportunity to look at cooperative learning as a process dealing with separate skills from Grades One to Six. According to Clara, the teachers discussed the problem with the principal at a staff meeting.

The fourth type of methodology problem also involved a problem of a general nature but was experienced by individual teachers. For example:

Debi was having a problem putting all three curricula (art, music, and social studies) into action in her classroom(s). In her view, these curricula arrived at the school too close together. She believed that in order to implement each curriculum as intended, she must be familiar with the content of each curriculum. However, according to Debi, she did not have the amount of time she believed was necessary to read each curricula and develop the necessary unit plans. She also explained that her particular teaching load, as well as having students who could not work independently, contributed to the lack of time she had for planning for curriculum implementation. Therefore, she approached the principal and discussed these difficulties with him.

However, even though individual teachers experienced methodology problems implementing a specific curriculum, they did not necessarily approach the principal with their problems. For instance,

> Lena was having a problem implementing Topic C of the social studies curriculum because she was reluctant to deal with the concept of ethnic backgrounds with six-year old children. She claimed that she was unsure of how much depth was required to complete this topic. The principal did not know that Lena was having this particular problem. Lena did not approach her regarding this problem because Lena said she did not have the time to examine it with the principal.

It is interesting to note that this teacher believed that time was a factor that prevented her from going to the principal for assistance. The teacher did not go into detail but gave the impression that the principal was not always available.

Materials problems. A materials problem is one where the lack of materials causes a curriculum implementation problem. Table 4 shows that teachers discussed materials problems only in relation to a separate subject. These problems were experienced by both individual teachers and the staff as a whole. In one school the problem was experienced as follows.

> Wendy was having a problem implementing the social studies curriculum because the suggested materials were not supplied. In her view, she had this problem because the curriculum guide arrived before the resources were available. She believed she needed the appropriate materials to provide the required information to the students. The principal knew she was having this problem because all of teachers in the school experienced the same problem when the curriculum first arrived.

In another school, the teacher reported the problem in this way.

> Tom was having a problem implementing the social studies curriculum because the suggested materials were not supplied. Tom identified two reasons for having this problem. First of all, in his view, he and the other

> teachers were having this problem because there were not enough funds to purchase the materials. Second, he believed that schools are not given enough time to purchase the materials required to implement the curriculum as intended. The principal knew he and the other teachers were having this problem because it was discussed at staff meetings.

In both schools teachers experienced problems implementing the social studies curriculum because of lack of materials. However, the basis for the problem was different. One teacher believed that the distribution of the curriculum guide before the suggested materials were available caused the problem, whereas the other teacher believed that a lack of funds and time to acquire materials caused the problem.

On the other hand, when teachers had problems with materials, they did not necessarily approach the principal with their problem. For example,

> Sara was having difficulty implementing the grade four social studies curriculum because the suggested materials were not supplied. In her view, she had this problem because the curriculum guide arrived before the resources were available. The principal did not know she was having this problem. She believed that if she had approached the principal with this problem, he could not have helped her since he did not have the necessary ordering information.

In this school, it is evident that teachers have different avenues for assistance. Therefore, when problems with materials are encountered, they seek assistance from such school-established sources as the assistant principal or a district consultant.

Table 4 shows that more problems were encountered by individual teachers than by the staff as a whole. That is, other teachers may have had the same problem but teachers asked for help individually. Since the interview questions specifically asked teachers to report problems they had implementing curricula, it is understandable that more problems were encountered by individual teachers than by the staff as a whole.

Teachers believed that interpretation problems occur when the terminology used in a document was too technical to understand. They also believed that methodology problems were experienced when they did not have sufficient or specific enough information on the techniques used to put the curriculum into action. According to teachers such factors as lack of funds and availability of materials contributed to materials problems.

No problems. As shown in Table 4, several teachers believed that they had very few or no problems implementing curricula and responded in two different ways. First, in some situations, a participant described one incident but could not recall another incident. In this situation the researcher requested a response to a curriculum problem to which the principal had referred. Some teachers responded by providing their perspective on the curriculum problem. For example:

> Kate claimed that she does not usually have a problem implementing curricula. Therefore, she could not think of another incident. The interviewer requested her reaction to the art curriculum as one discussed by the principal.
>
> Kate reacted negatively to the art curriculum stating that she strongly believes she is not an artist, and, therefore, she does not like teaching art. She also believed that the teaching of art requires the expertise of an art specialist, just as music is taught by a music specialist. The principal knew Kate was having a problem with implementing the art curriculum because Kate approached the principal and discussed it with her.

However, other teachers (School 6) remained firm, claiming they had no further incidents to discuss.

Second, in other situations, teachers believed they had no problems implementing curricula and, therefore, commented on problems involving the school as a whole that were identified either by another teacher, the principal, or the district. Usually these teachers believed that they did not have the problems with these subject areas that other teachers had. Instead, they described the

process in which they were involved and the role the principal played. For example:

> Clara claimed that as a Grade One teacher she had not had any problemsimplementing curricula. In her view, the district provided grade-level inservices the year prior to mandatory implementation of a curriculum. During these inservices, the teachers had the opportunity to discuss curriculum guides, receive district-prepared unit plans, and receive information on suggested materials (they were provided other materials, as well). Instead, she discussed one incident involving cooperative learning as a school-wide project.

It is interesting to note that some of the teachers believe that they have very little or no problems implementing curricula. Teachers may have difficulty admitting that they actually do have implementation problems. This is further supported by teachers often mentioning that while they had problems implementing curricula, other teachers had similar problems.

Conclusions Related to Types of Curriculum Implementation Problems

Several conclusions were drawn regarding the curriculum implementation problems described by teachers in their critical incidents.

1. The teachers had three types of problems with curriculum implementation: 1) interpretation problems; 2) methodology problems; 3) materials problems. The methodology problems were more prevalent than the materials and interpretation problems.

2. Some teachers could not recall any incidents where they had difficulty implementing curricula. This finding occurred with one or both of the teachers in three of the schools involved in the study.

3. In these incidents teachers most often described problems that pertained to themselves, mentioning that other teachers had similar problems. Teachers less often discussed problems experienced by the staff as a whole. When they did so, they indicated they personally had no problems implementing curricula and, therefore, discussed others' problems.

4. The teachers did not always go to the principal with their implementation problems. On some occasions teachers approached other principal-approved sources for assistance. Others did not seek assistance at all.

Types of Effective Assistance

During the interviews, the teachers described how their principals assisted them with curriculum implementation problems. The teachers identified three types of effective assistance. First, when teachers approached the principal, the principal helped them in a variety of ways with their implementation problems. Second, when teachers chose not to seek assistance from the principal, they received assistance from other sources. Third, some teachers also indicated that the principal initiated assistance without receiving a call for help from teachers.

The teacher approaching the principal. When the teachers approached the principals with their problems, principals assisted in two ways which the teachers found effective. One was by responding to teachers' requests for specific assistance. That is, the teacher knew what (s)he wanted and approached the principal with that request. The second was by responding to general requests for help. That is, the teacher indicated (s)he had a problem but did not specify the type of help preferred. Therefore, it was left up to the principal to decide on the help provided.

Table 5 summarizes the types of effective assistance teachers believed principals provides in response to specific requests. It shows that principals help by providing the following types of assistance that the teachers ask for: being

Table 5
Types of Effective Assistance:
Response to Specific Requests
(Teachers)

SCHOOL #		Is available to listen or to provide suggestions	Approves purchases of materials	Encourages inservices and/or invites consultants	Provides release time	Performs formative evaluations
1:	T.1	X X	X	X X		
	T.2	X X	X X	X X		
2:	T.1		X	X		X
	T.2		X			
3:	T.1	X	X	X X	X	
	T.2	X	X	X		
4:	T.1	X	X	X		
	T.2	X				
5:	T.1		X			
	T.2		X		X	
6:	T.1					
	T.2				X	

available to listen or to provide suggestions; approving the purchases of materials; encouraging teachers to attend inservices and/or inviting in consultants. Table 5 also shows that teachers less often ask for the principals to help by providing release time and performing formative evaluations.

The X's represent the times teachers indicated that the principal provided that type of assistance. There are more than two X's for each in this table because, according to the teachers, principals may provide more than one type of assistance for each problem. Furthermore, teachers stated that principals may have assisted in the same way for different problems. In this case, two X's are displayed in the same category for the same teacher.

The following example from the researcher's notes illustrates the principal assisting by providing the kind of help the teacher requested. In that school:

> Carol was having a problem discovering how to set up and use a math lab. She explained that she did not have the knowledge to instruct grade six math through the use of manipulatives. In her view, using a math lab to instruct math through the use of manipulatives is necessary for the implementation of the imminent math curriculum. She and another teacher approached the principal requesting if they could set up a math lab in the school. They also explained that they needed to learn techniques on the use of manipulatives for math instruction.
>
> Carol believed the principal helped in two ways. First, she helped the teachers by listening to their ideas and approving inservices the teachers requested to attend. Second, the principal also approved their purchasing manipulatives and provided release time for them to frequently attend inservices (at Central Services and other schools that have math labs). The principal was also helpful by finding out when and where the inservices were held.
>
> In Carol's view, the principal chose to help in these ways because the principal realizes that Carol will be able to use this knowledge in her classroom. Since Carol is also one of the math resource people who assists other teachers with instruction through the use of manipulatives, others benefit as well. Earlier, the principal stated that she effectively helped by

approving the purchase of materials and providing teachers with release time.

Carol said she responded well to being given the opportunity to learn how to set up a math lab and how to instruct math through the use of manipulatives. She believed that the problem is being solved. In her view, learning these skills is directly beneficial to her own classroom.

According to Carol, the principal's approval and support worked because she could focus on what she believed was important for her students. In Carol's view, sharing her ideas with teachers at staff meetings or professional development days (one hour early dismissal for students every second Thursday) is beneficial to everyone. She believed the principal could not have helped in a more effective way.

In this incident the teacher informed the principal of the problem she was having and also suggested the type of help she believed would remedy the situation. The principal did indeed provide the help the teacher requested and for interesting reasons, which the teacher realized.It is interesting to note that the teacher believed that the staff as a whole might benefit from the assistance she received from the principal.

Table 6 summarizes the types of effective assistance teachers believed the principals provided in response to general requests. In these cases, the teachers did not specify the type of help they preferred. Instead, the teachers informed the principals of the problem they were having, and the principals were required to assist in their own way. Table 6 shows that teachers believed that principals assist most frequently by being available to listen or to provide suggestions, initiating school projects, approving school inservices, and arranging grade-group meetings. It also shows that teachers less often reported that principals assisted by identifying programs and locating funds.

The X's represent the types of effective assistance which teachers indicated the principal provided in response to general requests for help. There are fewer on this Table than on Table 5 because the teachers less often described incidents where they approached the principal with a problem without stating the kind of

Table 6
Types of Effective Assistance:
Response to General Requests
(Teachers)

SCHOOL #		Initiates school projects	Approves school inservices	Arranges grade – group meetings	Is available to listen or to provide suggestions	Identifies programs	Locates funds
1:	T.1						
	T.2						
2:	T.1	X	X				
	T.2						
3:	T.1		X	X			
	T.2	X		X	X		
4:	T.1				X		
	T.2				X X		
5:	T.1	X	X	X		X	
	T.2	X	X	X		X	X
6:	T.1	X		X			
	T.2						

assistance they preferred. Also, note that some teachers indicated that principals assisted in different ways for the same incident. The principal may have also assisted similarly in the two incidents teachers described. Therefore, there are more X's than number of incidents.

The following example illustrates the principal providing assistance to a teacher who informed the principal of a problem she was having but did not indicate the type of assistance preferred.

> Irene's second problem was implementing the personal safety (sexual abuse) section of the health curriculum. She was having this problem because she had fears and anxieties about dealing with familial issues with young children. She approached the principal to discuss her concerns.
>
> The principal helped in two ways. First of all, she helped by encouraging Irene to attend the inservices that the district was providing. According to Irene, the principal chose to help in this way because the principal believes that teachers need new ideas and time to work through issues and share their problems with others.
>
> Second, the principal helped by providing the teachers with Monday-morning meetings. According to Irene, she could discuss the problems she was having, explain some of the ways she was feeling, and discuss how to handle some of the students' questions. Other teachers discussed their fears regarding the impact of such a program (speculations about students saying "no" to everyone, falsely reporting people, and not allowing anyone to touch them).
>
> Irene said she responded very well to an inservice because it alleviated some of her fears. She indicated that after the inservice she tried out some of the lessons and found the suggestions helpful. In addition, discussing the program at the Monday-morning meetings helped because the teachers could immediately share what was happening in their classrooms.
>
> Irene's view of effective assistance is consistent with the principal's view. Earlier, the principal had stated she helps by encouraging teachers to attend inservices and collaborate at meetings because they need new ideas, the time, and the opportunity to share and work together through their problems.
>
> The problem of implementing the personal safety section of the health curriculum was solved. The teachers discovered that their speculations did

> not happen and became more and more comfortable in dealing with the issues.
>
> Irene believed that being encouraged to attend the inservice and being given meeting time Monday morning worked because they have new ideas and the time to work through their anxieties. The support system that the teachers had developed provided them with the feeling that they were not alone in their concerns. As a result, they felt better about what they were doing. Irene does not believe that the principal could have helped in a more effective way since this was a new program and the issues dealt with were so sensitive.

In this incident, the teacher informed the principal of the problem she was having implementing a particular section of the curriculum. However, the teacher did not request the kind of assistance she preferred. Therefore, the principal derived an interesting solution. As well as encouraging the teacher to attend district inservices, the principal also encouraged the staff as a whole to collaborate. The principal encouraged the teachers to work together on a problem that was common to them all.

Teachers not approaching the principal. In addition to principals assisting teachers with curriculum problems, there were times when the principal did not assist for two reasons. First, teachers did not always approach principals (or anyone else) with their problems. However, teachers were sometimes assisted indirectly through standard support mechanisms that the principals established. For example,

> Lena was having a problem implementing Topic C of the social studies curriculum because she was reluctant to deal with the concept of ethnic backgrounds with six-year old children. She claimed that she was unsure of how much depth was required to complete this topic. The principal did not know that Lena was having this particular problem. Lena did not approach her regarding this problem because Lena said she did not have the time to examine it with the principal.
>
> However, in Lena's view, the principal helped indirectly in two ways. First, the principal requested long range plans stating when the teachers intended

to teach each topic for social studies. Second, the principal encouraged the teachers to attend inservices.

Lena believed the principal chose to help in these ways because this forces teachers to focus on the social studies curriculum. In addition, Lena believed that the principal encourages inservices because the teachers quickly become aware of the curriculum's intent and more comfortable with teaching that curriculum. Earlier, the principal stated that she effectively helped by providing the teachers with the time, opportunity, and resources to become comfortable with the curriculum.

Lena said she responded well to doing the long-range plans and the inservices. In her view, the long-range planning forced her to deal with teaching Topic C instead of avoiding this section of the curriculum. The inservices increases her awareness level of different methods she could use to implement this topic.

Lena believed that the principal's help worked because Lena was held accountable for implementing the curriculum as intended. In her view, the principal could not have helped in a more effective way. Lena believed that "group" help is better than individual help. She also believed that help initiated by the principal is better than help requested by teachers.

In this incident, the teacher believed the principal helped by establishing standards for teachers to follow. As a result, even though she did not approach the principal with her problem, the principal effectively assisted in an indirect manner.

Second, in some instances when teachers needed help implementing curricula, they sought assistance from individuals other than the principal. The following description illustrates this.

Sara was having difficulty implementing the grade four social studies curriculum because the suggested materials were not supplied. In her view, she had this problem because the curriculum guide arrived before the resources were available. The principal did not know she was having this problem. She believed that if she had approached the principal with this problem, he could not have helped her since he did not have the necessary ordering information.

According to Sara, she approached the assistant principal because curriculum materials were his responsibility. In addition, she contacted the curriculum consultant at district office for assistance. The assistant principal helped by ordering the materials Sara requested. The curriculum consultant helped by sending packages of materials to Sara. In Sara's view, consultants are able to make appropriate suggestions because of their experience as teachers. Sara believed that, as a result, the consultant responded immediately providing her with exactly what she needed. In addition, Sara stated that the consultant continued to send her information regarding curriculum materials.

Sara said she responded very favorably to the assistant principal's and consultant's assistance. She believed the problem is solved and will not hesitate to contact the consultant if she needs more help. She added that she was quite sure that, even if she did not contact the consultant, more information would be sent to her.

In addition, Sara explained that at that time there were no district inservices for grade four social studies teachers to attend. If there were, she would have approached the principal, as she normally does, to attend. In her view, the principal is very supportive of professional development. According to her, he continually encourages and approves attendance at inservices. He readily provides teachers with release time and obtains substitute teachers for the classroom. According to Sara, the principal helps in this way because he is very supportive of teachers learning all that they can that will enable them to meet students' needs. In Sara's view, the principal could not be more effective unless there were more funds available to schools. Then he could approach teachers individually, asking if they needed any resources to assist them with the implementation. Otherwise, she believed that such expectations were unrealistic.

Earlier the principal stated that assistance with curriculum implementation is a shared responsibility. He believed that he effectively helped by encouraging teachers to attend inservices and approving the purchase of materials.

In this incident the teacher required help with implementing a curriculum, but approached the assistant principal and district consultant for help instead of the principal. It is interesting that the teacher went to principal-approved sources. She was following procedures previously established by the principal.

Principals initiate assistance. As well, principals may initiate a curriculum change in response to what the principal perceives is necessary for the benefit of all the students in the school. In this example, although the principal initiated a school-wide project, teachers requested specific assistance they perceived necessary to implement this addition to the curriculum.

> According to Tom, the principal initiated a discussion concerning the health curriculum at their staff meeting. She indicated to the teachers that she felt that they should focus on pro-social skills because of the number of discipline problems they had in their school. The teachers agreed that teaching pro-social skills would be beneficial to their classrooms and the school, but they needed more information on how to implement this aspect of the curriculum.
>
> Tom believed the principal helped by inservicing the teachers herself during a series of mini-workshops (after school and at regular staff meetings). After the principal's presentation, the teachers shared ideas in small groups and then presented their suggestions to the group as a whole.
>
> In Tom's view, the principal chose to help by initiating pro-social skills as a school-wide project because she cares about students. Tom also stated that, as a counsellor, the principal is experienced with working with problem-students and willingly shared that expertise with the teachers.
>
> Tom said he responded well to the opportunity to share ideas with the principal and other teachers. He believed that, as a result, he put more effort into teaching pro-social skills to his students. In his view, pro-social skills have solved much of his classroom's and the school's discipline problems.
>
> According to Tom, the principal initiating the pro-social skills project worked because the teachers realize that the principal cares about the students. Tom does not believe the principal could have helped in a more effective way. According to him, the principal stressed the importance of the health curriculum. In his view, when the principal illustrated that she valued a curriculum, the teachers and the students tried harder to meet the objectives of that curriculum.

In this incident, the principal's assistance was two-fold. First, the principal initiated a project that she believed was beneficial for all students in the school.

Improvement of student behavior would probably make life easier for the teachers and the students. Second, the principal assisted the teachers with techniques of implementing the pro-social skills section of the health curriculum by inservicing the teachers herself. Teachers believed this was effective assistance because the principal demonstrated commitment to the students in the school and valued the health curriculum.

Conclusions Related To Types of Effective Assistance

The conclusions drawn from the critical incidents concerning teachers' perceptions of effective assistance may be summarized as follows.

1. When the teachers went to the principal for help, they usually asked for specific kinds of help rather than making general requests for assistance. 2. The teachers believed that principals effectively assisted them with curriculum implementation by: 1) providing teachers with what they specifically requested; 2) developing their own types of assistance when teachers informed them about a problem; and 3) initiating a school-wide project in which all teachers would take part. More teachers chose to report problems experienced by themselves personally. Sometimes that principal helped just that teacher but often included the staff as a whole.

3. The teachers believed that the principals effectively assisted by giving the type of help the teachers wanted. The teachers' specific requests included being available to listen or to provide suggestions, approving the purchase of materials and encouraging inservices and/or inviting in consultants. Teachers less frequently asked for release time and formative evaluations. For example, materials problems were usually solved by one-time, quick-fix solutions, such as approving funds for the purchase of materials.

4. When the teachers made a general request for assistance, the principals frequently assisted by being available to listen or to provide suggestions,

initiating school projects, approving school inservices, and arranging grade-group meetings. Such solutions were required for some methodology and the interpretation problems. Teachers also reported that the principals sometimes helped by identifying programs and locating funds.

5. Some of the teachers did not approach the principalwith their curriculum implementation problems. However, they believed that they received effective assistance in two ways. First, they believed that the principal helped indirectly through established school policies. Second, they indicated that they received help from other principal-approved sources such as the vice-principal and the district consultant.

Discussion Related to the Conclusions

The following discussion illustrates how some of the conclusions are consistent with the literature, while others are not.

One finding that is consistent with the literature involves the large number of methodology problems the teachers experienced when implementing curricula. Fullan (1991) and Sparks (1988) cite Doyle and Ponder's notion of teachers' "practicality ethic". These researchers found that unless teachers clearly understand the procedures involved for implementing a change, their problems will be difficult to resolve. "Need, clarity, and the personal benefit/ cost ratio must be favorable at some point relatively early in the implementation....Support during initial trials is critical for getting through the first stages, as is some sign of progress" (Fullan, 1991, p. 129). Most of the teachers in the thesis study approached the principal as soon as they experienced problems with "how to" teach different aspects of a curriculum.

Furthermore, teachers believed that they have problems implementing some curricula because they were not sufficiently prepared to teach such subjects as art and physical education. This supports Goodlad's (1984) findings "that nearly

30% of the elementary school teachers perceived themselves as not adequately prepared in the arts and that nearly 20% described themselves similarly in relation to physical education" (p. 184).

However, several of the teachers who participated in the study indicated they have no problems implementing curricula. As Rosenholtz (1989) suggests, in isolated settings teachers may avoid calling attention to themselves which brings their performance into question. On the other hand, Sparks (1988, cites Ashton) states that some teachers have "confidence in their own ability to handle things in their classrooms" (p.112).

Another finding that is consistent with the literature is that many teachers relied on their principals for assistance. However, several teachers simply required the principal's support. Sparks (1988), in a study on teacher attitudes towards change, indicates that "improving teachers differed from non-improving teachers in their willingness to experiment with recommended practices and in their self-efficacy. These teachers were more confident that they could make improvements in their classes" (p. 117). Most teachers in the study knew what works in their classroom and, therefore, took the initiative to develop their own solutions to curriculum implementation problems. They approached the principal for approval of the kinds of help they believed worked. Therefore, they perceived that the principal providing the kind of help that teachers wanted as effective assistance.

According to Fullan (1991), "teachers need to participate in skill-training workshops, but they also need to have one-to-one and group opportunities to receive and give help and more simply to converse about the meaning of change" (p.132). Several teachers who participated in the thesis study believed that principals supported them by giving the kinds of help the teachers wanted, as well as providing solutions to open-ended calls for help. For example, teachers were encouraged to attend district inservices, many principals were available to the teachers, and some principals established regular grade-group meetings in their schools.

However, interestingly, not all of the teachers who participated in the study approached the principal for assistance. Some teachers perceived that they did not need assistance or they had no time to seek assistance. This finding is consistent with other research results. Fullan (1991) indicates that "This outcome will occur in situations where teachers are satisfied with their current program and/or when they perceive that administrative support is low" (p.133). Rosenholtz (1989) claims that "isolated settings compel teachers in the opposite direction--toward norms of self reliance. Under these circumstances, requests and offers of assistance seem less apt to occur" (p. 44).

Other teachers in the study indicated that they approach others, such as the assistant principal and the curriculum consultant, for assistance.This finding provides support for Hord and Hall's (1987) consideration of the second change facilitator. They found that an assistant principal, curriculum consultant or another teacher, who complements the role of the principal, may also assist in a change process.

However, there are also findings that are not consistent with the literature. According to Goodlad (1984), "teaching across several subjects simultaneously is common practice in elementary schools, and it appears, creates few subject-matter problems for teachers" (p.186). However, the incidents described by some of the teachers indicated that teachers do sometimes have problems implementing more than one new or one curricula at a time. As well, the large number of methodology problems teachers have with implementing curricula does not support the literature. Furthermore, the interpretation problem involving the art curriculum illustrated that teachers who were not specifically trained for this subject area had difficulty understanding what they were to teach.

Another inconsistency with the literature involves the study finding that teachers often work together as a whole staff to solve curriculum implementation problems. According to Goodlad (1984), teachers seldom worked together, actively exchanging ideas. Furthermore, Lieberman (1986) and

Rosenholtz (1989) indicate that principals and teachers are very often on opposite sides of the fence and, therefore, are reluctant to work with one another. According to interview findings, however, although teachers initially identified a problem from a personal perspective, very often other teachers or the staff as a whole became involved in the solution. The teachers also identified the strategies principals used to either work closely with the teacher individually or to promote collaboration.

Congruence Between the Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions

The third research question raised in this study is as follows.

> Is there congruence between principals' and teachers' perceptions of the assistance with implementation which principals give to teachers?

In order to answer this question, the researcher will compare the previous sections on the principals' and teachers' perceptions. The researcher has also selected one of the schools from the study and will present her notes in their entirety to illustrate how congruency can exist between the principal's and teachers' perceptions.

Comparison of Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions

The following section summarizes points that were drawn from the previous sections on the principals' perceptions and the teachers' perceptions. The incidents described by the principals and teachers show that there are similarities, as well as differences, between their perceptions of effective assistance with curriculum implementation. The types of problems will be

briefly discussed, followed by the types of assistance, with points of agreement and disagreement noted for each.

Types of problems. Congruency between principals and teachers can be seen concerning the types of problems teachers have with curriculum implementation. First of all, both principals and teachers agreed that teachers experience interpretation, methodology, and materials problems when implementing curricula. Second, both principals and teachers agreed that teachers experience methodology problems more often than materials and interpretation problems. Some teachers, however, reported that they had no or very few problems implementing curricula.

Some differences exist as well. According to principals, more problems applied to the staff as a whole than to individual teachers. The teachers, on the other hand, discussed problems with curriculum implementation from a personal perspective. When teachers approached the principal with a problem, they usually informed the principal about how the problem affected them as individuals. That is, principals and teachers viewed these problems from different perspectives. Teachers view these problems from the perspective of their own classrooms, while principals approach these problems from a whole school perspective.

Types of assistance. Congruence between principals and teachers can also be seen regarding the types of assistance the principal provided. Principals and teachers agreed that principals effectively assisted with curriculum implementation in two ways. One way was by simply doing what teachers ask. Teachers were quite happy when principals gave them the assistance they asked for. The types of assistance the teachers most often asked for, according to both principals and teachers, were: the principal being available to teachers; the principal approving the purchase of materials that teachers requested; and the principal encouraging teachers to attend the inservices the teachers requested. On some occasions, principals would add further assistance that they believed would be helpful.

The second way that principals provided effective assistance was by developing their own solutions to teachers' open-ended requests for help. Both teachers and principals believed that principals effectively responded to open-ended calls for help by initiating school-wide projects, approving school inservices and arranging grade group meetings. Sometimes the principal would help that individual teacher, but they usually involved the staff as a whole.

However, the teachers perceived that the principal being available to listen and make suggestions was effective assistance with general calls for help as well. The principals had not reported this during their discussion of the incidents. On the other hand, principals reported modelling in the classroom as effective assistance which the teachers did not mention.

A School Description

The following school has been selected from the study for two reasons. First of all, this particular school demonstrates a high degree of congruence showing what it can be like when the principal and teachers are on the same wavelength. According to the literature (e.g., Sweeney, 1982), this particular school would be viewed as an effective school--an ideal for which schools should strive. Second, real people in an actual school setting are being discussed and it is important to realize that people can work closely together in such an environment.

The description is taken from the summaries of the researcher's notes drawn from the interview responses. The names of the school, the principal, and the teachers used in the researcher's notes are fictitious names. Note also that a section called, "The principal's roles and responsibilities" is introduced in this description. This section will be discussed further in this chapter.

School background information. Oakland School has a population of 380 students in Grades K to Six. Fifteen full-time classroom teachers, all of whom have taught for more than two years, teach at Oakland. Other staff members include an assistant principal, counsellor, teacher-librarian, teacher-aides and secretaries. The assistant principal helps teachers with curriculum implementation by ordering the necessary materials and working closely with the English teachers (the principal works more closely with the French Immersion teachers). The teacher-librarian uses her time to teach library skills to students rather than helping teachers with curriculum implementation. Teachers assist each other with curriculum implementation through subject area committees. This committee consists of two or three teachers, one of whom is the coordinator.

Background of the principal. Dora has been the principal of Oakland School for five years. She was a principal for six years at another school before coming to this school. She originally prepared herself for a principalship during her year as assistant principal at a different school. During Dora's assistant principalship, her main responsibility was helping teachers implement curricula. Dora then took a one-year leave of absence to obtain her Master's degree in administration. The courses she had taken which provided ideas about assisting teachers with curriculum implementation were the administration courses on educational change and personnel supervision.

The principal's roles and responsibilities. Dora's priority is instructional leadership as indicated by degree of importance (5) and amount of time (5) which she ascribes to that role. However, the management and administration roles (both 4) are close behind. She believes that both good management and administrative skills are necessary to be an instructional leader. However, Dora claims that only an instructional leader can effectively set educational priorities.

Dora spends time in different roles at different times of the year (the emphasis on the role is determined by the tasks required at a certain time; e.g., timetabling-August; budgeting-February). She focuses on the following responsibilities: 1) planning long range goals; 2) talking with teachers and parents about students' progress; 3) attending to teacher requests for assistance (curriculum, student discipline, materials); 4) timetabling; and 5) setting the school's budget. Other responsibilities are delegated to and shared by the assistant principal, teaching staff and

secretarial staff, as follows: 1) planning for inservice (some set by the district, some suggested by the principal, some requested by the teachers); 2) setting yearly priorities [school administration (principal and assistant principal) and teachers]; 3) keeping track of funds (assistant principal and secretaries); 4) supervising students at recess and noon hour (set by the school administration/done by teachers); and 5) completing reports (secretaries fill out/administrators sign).

Incident 1. The problem the teachers were having was implementing the art curriculum. Dora knew there was a problem because after the teachers read the new curriculum document they told the principal they did not understand what they were to teach. She believed the teachers were having this problem because the curriculum was vague. In Dora's view, since many teachers lack expertise in art, the curriculum should be written in such a way that people who don't know how to "do art" can understand how to teach it.

Dora could not directly help because she indicated that she did not understand the curriculum either. However, she helped indirectly in two ways. First, Central Office requested that each school in the district send one teacher for inservicing. Central Office initiated the inservices, Dora's responsibility was to select a teacher to attend. This teacher then worked with the rest of the teachers in the school. Second, Dora made sure that all the materials needed to implement the curriculum were purchased. She chose to help in this way because she wanted to find a way to build up the teachers' confidence and sense of comfort with a subject that they had not been trained to teach and which they did not perceive to be as important as the "academic subjects".

In Dora's view, the teachers responded well to these kinds of help, but they still expressed to her their fear of teaching the art curriculum; they needed more help. Therefore, Dora supported teachers' requests to attend inservices. For example, two of the teachers, who have an interest in art, attended a fine arts conference sponsored by the ATA. She hoped that one of these teachers would eventually become one of the school's art coordinators. Most recently, a teacher-committee set up an art festival week for the students of the school (approved by the principal) where each day, all day long, each teacher and her class observed how artists "do art". The teachers learned along with the students, claiming that, since they saw the process, they felt more comfortable about teaching students. Dora indicated that the problem was not completely solved. There were still two teachers on staff who refuse to teach art; instead, they trade art for another

subject with other teachers. Other teachers continue to express some anxiety with the painting and drawing sections of the curriculum.

Dora believed that district and school inservices and sufficient time to work through the curriculum were helpful because the teachers were able to learn artistic procedures, become comfortable with teaching art, and become confident with their own ability. She would use those same kinds of help with another curriculum because she believed that inservices and sufficient time are necessary in situations where few teachers have the expertise and/or talent needed to teach the curriculum. As a result, her role in assisting teachers with curriculum implementation was to remain in the background (behind the scenes) and allow teachers to work through the difficulties.

Incident 2. The problem the teachers had was dealing with the personal safety (sexual abuse) section of the health curriculum. Dora knew there was a problem because of the principal-initiated discussions of the up-coming curriculum at several staff meetings. She thought that the teachers had this problem because they wondered how they would cope with the delicate, societal issues that were involved. They had no idea how personal safety would be handled, what kinds of materials were available, what expectations were held by the people who developed the program, and how the parents would respond.

Dora chose to help by being accessible to the teachers because she believed that all teachers need to have support and someone who will listen to them. In addition, the district decided that the teachers had to be inserviced before they taught the personal safety section. Each teacher attended a three-to-four day inservice (substitute teachers provided by the district for the classrooms) where teachers became familiar with the materials, the expectations of the developers, and how the issues were handled. Central Office also required that parents be informed about the content of the personal safety program and provide written consent for their child to be involved in the program. Therefore, an evening parent meeting was provided by a representative group of teachers, the counsellor, and the principal to explain the program and to receive written consent from each parent.

In Dora's view, the teachers responded very well to the inservices and the principal's open-door policy. She believed that they liked the materials they used, they were comfortable with the issues they discussed, they knew the parents approved, and they talked to Dora informally and individually

on several occasions. Dora believed the problem was solved since the teachers now willingly approach the topic. An added bonus has been students coming forward and reporting sexual abuse which convinces the principal and teachers that the program is worthwhile.

Dora believed that the inservices worked because they gave the teachers the proper foundation, philosophy, techniques, and information about the materials they were to use. Furthermore, she believed her open-door policy helped because teachers need to feel that someone cares enough to listen. She would use that same kind of help for teachers again regardless of the grade they were teaching, the curriculum they were implementing, the amount of teaching experience they had, and the language used for instruction. As a result, Dora's role was to suggest teachers attend inservices and to be available to talk with the teachers whenever they needed her.

Conclusions Drawn. The conclusions from this case study about the principal's role in curriculum implementation are as follows.

1. Principal's role

This principal chose instructional leadership as her dominant role. She interprets instructional leadership as providing the teachers with whatever they need (materials, inservices, support, time) to make their job easier. She is reactive rather than proactive as indicated by waiting for the teachers to ask for help and approving Central Office's ideas and the suggestions of the teacher committees.

The principal believes that the management and administration roles are close behind instructional leadership based upon the degree of importance and the amount of time she spends on these roles. In her view, the tasks performed in instructional leadership, management and administration overlap, requiring her to be effective in all three roles. She indicates that timetabling (an administrative task) has direct impact on the ease with which curriculum is delivered in the classroom. In addition, she realizes that teachers work very hard, and she does her best to make school life as easy as possible so that both teachers and students are happy.

The principal claims that, in order for her to ensure that all the necessary roles and responsibilities are carried out, she delegates several of the duties to the assistant principal, the teachers and the secretaries. There appear to be two reasons for this approach. First of all, efficiency is probably important to her since all three roles are important and a great deal of time is necessary to perform these roles. Since there is only so much time, delegation is an efficient strategy. Second, the principal could also be promoting a team atmosphere where everyone works together for the same purpose. Since all these duties ultimately influence the education of the students attending the school, all staff members are encouraged to pull together to assist with the necessary responsibilities.

Assistance with curriculum implementation becomes a shared responsibility as indicated by: 1) the principal and assistant principal sharing responsibility for French Immersion teachers and English teachers respectively; 2) the principal's support of district inservices; and 3) the teachers' support of each other through subject-area committees.

2. The principal's view of effective assistance

Since the principal perceives her dominant role to be instructional leadership, her view of effective assistance includes supporting Central Office's inservices on new or revised curricula by encouraging teachers to attend them. This is indicated by her belief that inservices are beneficial for implementing curricula that contain sensitive issues (sexual abuse) or where there are few people who have the required expertise to teach the curriculum (e.g., art).

She also views her open-door policy as effective assistance. This principal suggested that she is available to teachers whenever they want to discuss their problems, but they must first request the help. She will not impose her help, which is consistent with a reactor's role. She chooses not to assist teachers with problems unless they approach her and explain the nature of the problem.

3. Principal's view of teachers

The principal's open-door policy suggests that she sees teachers as autonomous, requiring support rather than supervision. This may be why she delegates some of the responsibility for curriculum implementation to subject-area committees. This could be her modus operandi for promoting a team atmosphere--supporting teachers and encouraging their support as well.

In the principal's view each teacher has different methods and great strengths; therefore, she would not impose her methods upon teachers. This could be the basis for her open-door policy. She is available to help teachers only if they ask for her assistance.

4. Principal's view of curriculum implementation

The principal believes that, in order for teachers to implement curricula, they need to have clear and concise directions, time to become familiar with the curricula, and administrative support. The curriculum problems identified by the principal involved interpretation of what someone else had written. The principal described the art curriculum as vague and said the teachers felt unsure of the intentions of the developers of the personal safety program. Encouraging teachers to attend district and school inservices may be her mode of assisting teachers to become more comfortable with the curriculum by providing them with more exposure to the ideas presented.

Background of teacher 1. Kate is a Grade Three French Immersion teacher. She has taught French Immersion in this school for five years and has had nine years previous experience teaching French Immersion.

The teacher's view of the principal's roles. Kate believes the principal's priority is instructional leadership (as, indeed, the principal stated) as indicated by degree of importance (5) and amount of time spent on that role (4). The degree of importance Kate believes the principal places on the other roles is management, 4 and administration, 3. However, she claims that the principal spends an equal amount of time (also 4) on the management and administration roles. According to Kate, the principal spends an equal amount of time in all three roles because the principal has no control over such responsibilities as completing paperwork, talking to

parents as necessary, and budgeting. As a result the principal ends up dividing her time equally. As previously discussed, the principal similarly noted that all three roles take about the same amount of time.

Kate is in agreement with the principal when she believes that, as instructional leader, the principal influences curriculum implementation by: 1) discussing up-coming curriculum changes at staff meetings; 2) ensuring that all staff members are aware of inservices; and 3) seeking out people to come in and assist teachers with curriculum changes. Kate identified the following additional points which the principal had not mentioned. Kate believes the principal also influences curriculum implementation by: 1) checking teachers' long range plans to ensure that they tie in to the curriculum; 2) emphasizing that teachers teach the curriculum rather than the textbook; and 3) requesting teachers refer to the Program of Studies to ensure they are teaching at the appropriate grade level if a problem arises.

Incident 1. Kate was having a problem teaching dictionary skills to her Grade Three students. Her current teaching strategies were not working. Therefore, she approached the principal and discussed this difficulty with her.

The principal helped by suggesting ways to teach dictionary skills that she had used. Kate believed the principal made suggestions in order to help teachers cope and alleviated stress. Kate kept referring to the principal's specific, concrete suggestions as a means of help. Alleviation of stress appears to be very important to Kate. According to her, teachers' problems are usually not new problems to the principal.

Kate said she responded well to the suggestions provided by the principal. She followed the principal's suggestions and the problem of teaching dictionary skills was solved.

Whenever any type of problem arises, Kate makes an appointment with the principal during her preparation time and has no problem getting to see the principal. She believed that the principal's open-door policy helped because she felt at ease about going to the principal for help without any fear of her difficulties showing up on an evaluation. She did not believe that the principal could have been more effective. In Kate's view, principals are most effective by being available to talk when teachers have a problem. Earlier, the principal stated that she effectively helped by being available to teachers because teachers need to feel that someone cares enough to listen. Kate stated that the principal also helped by taking the pressure off teachers, for example by suggesting that they get through as much of the

curriculum as they can without worrying about completion.

During the interview, Kate initiated a discussion concerning the principal's effectiveness in encouraging teachers to work together. For example, the principal encourages the French Immersion and the English teachers to work together. Also, the principal usually teams a new teacher in the school with an experienced teacher.

Incident 2. Kate claimed that she does not usually have a problem implementing curricula. Therefore, she could not think of another incident. The interviewer requested her reaction to the art curriculum as one discussed by the principal.

Kate reacted negatively to the art curriculum stating that she strongly believed she is not an artist, and, therefore, she does not like teaching art. She also believed that the teaching of art requires the expertise of an art specialist, just as music is taught by a music specialist. The principal knew Kate was having a problem with implementing the art curriculum because Kate approached the principal and discussed it with her.

According to Kate, the principal helped in three ways. First, the principal suggested inservices that were available for teachers who wanted to attend. However, in Kate's view, even though she attended, these inservices did not help because they were for only one day. She again talked to the principal, requesting that a teacher who is a good artist provide ten-minute mini-workshops on different art techniques (at each staff meeting). The principal agreed to this, which gave the teachers more time to become familiar with the techniques. Kate stated that the principal seeks out those teachers whose strengths and interests are in a particular subject area and asks them for suggestions for improvement. Second, the principal helped by ensuring that all the appropriate support materials (art prints, watercolors, etc.) were available. Third, in Kate's view, the principal was also receptive to teachers trading specific art lessons with another teacher for lessons in another subject.

Kate believed that the principal chose to help by encouraging teachers to attend inservices, providing support materials, and permitting teachers to trade classes because this is her way of making life easier for the teachers.

Earlier, the principal had stated that she helps by encouraging teachers to attend inservices and provide materials so that teachers lives are easier. However, the principal did not believe that the art curriculum problem was solved by trading classes.

Kate indicated that, although the principal did all that she could by suggesting inservices and providing the materials, the principal could not make her comfortable with teaching art. Kate believed that the onus is on herself to become more familiar with art techniques so that she feels some degree of comfort. She claimed that everything has been set up, the materials are all there, and there is no more that the principal can do.

Kate did not mention the school's recent art week. Therefore, the interviewer requested her reaction to it. She responded positively to the children being provided a different perspective on art. She believed that she was also much better at teaching painting and drawing now, indicating that she learned more than her students. Kate believed that the principal could not have helped in a more effective way, indicating that it's now up to her to learn whatever she can about teaching painting and drawing. She stated that she had not yet thought about how she would approach learning more about art techniques.

Background of teacher 2. Betty is a Grade One English teacher. She has taught in this school for five years and has had twenty-two years previous experience teaching at the early elementary level.

The teacher's view of the principal's roles. Unlike the principal, Betty believes the principal's priority is administration as indicated by degree of importance (5) and amount of time spent (5). Instructional leadership is next important (4) with not as much time spent (3), while management is the least important role (3) with the least amount of time spent (2). In Betty's view, the instructional leadership and management roles are delegated to the assistant principal and the teachers; therefore, these roles take less time than the administration role. She believes that the administration role takes so much time because the principal needs to arrange timetables and classroom enrollments for both English and French Immersion. The principal also spends time on such paperwork as surveys and boundary areas for students attending that school.

Betty believes that the principal works on a day-to-day basis doing things that make life easier for everyone and ensuring that this school is a happy place for teachers and students. As previously discussed, the principal also stated that her goal is to make life as easy for everyone as possible. The principal hopes that the school is a happy place for staff and students. Betty claims that she appreciates the time the principal spends in administration because the burden is removed from the teachers' shoulders. According to her, teachers themselves attempting to timetable would be disastrous.

Betty believes that, as administrator, the principal influences curriculum implementation by knowing what she must delegate. Betty claims that the principal has to know all the information the school receives concerning the education of the children, what the new curricula are, and who the best person would be to help the teachers implement the new curricula. This is consistent with the principal's view of her role with respect to curriculum implementation.

Incident 1. Betty's problem was knowing how to deal with the issues raised in the personal safety (sexual abuse) section of the health curriculum. She indicated she was having this problem because she felt uncomfortable talking about sexual abuse with young children. The principal knew Betty was having this problem because Betty approached the principal and discussed it with her.

The principal helped by listening and giving suggestions about how to handle some issues raised by the curriculum. Betty claimed she responded well to the principal's suggestions and believed the problem was solved. She no longer had any difficulty teaching the personal safety section of the health curriculum. According to Betty, she always felt comfortable with the principal and also felt the principal was available whenever Betty needed her--she never had to wait.

Betty believed that the principal chose to help by being available to teachers because of the principal's previous experiences as a teacher. As a result, the principal realized that teachers need someone who will listen. This is consistent with the principal's belief that she effectively helped by being available to teachers because they need to feel that someone cares enough to listen. Betty claimed that the principal helps all teachers this way regardless of grade level, teaching experience, and language of instruction.

Betty believed that the principal's being available worked because teachers need to feel that they can depend on the principal whenever they need support. She indicated that this principal could not have helped her in a more effective way. Betty has not worked as easily with any other principal. Betty believed that the principal is like a friend as well as a colleague. Betty requested a transfer to this school upon hearing that this principal was to be assigned here, even though Betty lives in another city. Betty claimed she can comfortably ask the principal to supervise her classroom if she needed to be elsewhere for awhile.

Betty also indicated that the principal builds rapport with all the staff in a variety of ways. For example, during parent-teacher interviews, on Thursday night, the principal invites the teachers to her house for supper (this is helpful to those teachers who live long distances from the school).

Incident 2. Betty indicated that as a Grade One teacher she does not usually have a problem implementing curricula. Therefore, she could not think of another incident. The interviewer requested her reaction to the art curriculum which had been discussed by the principal.

Betty claimed that she had a problem implementing the art curriculum only because of unavailability of art materials. She was having this problem because she always had to hunt all over the school to locate the necessary materials. The principal knew she was having a problem locating the materials because Betty talked to her about it.

The principal helped by organizing the art materials in the art room and in the teachers' workroom. Betty believed that the principal chose to help by doing this work herself rather than delegating the work because of the principal's experiences as a teacher. She knew what to keep, what to throw out, and how to organize the materials. Furthermore, according to Betty, the principal is aware that teachers are too busy teaching to do this themselves; therefore, the principal completed the task.

Betty also stated that the principal knows what the problems are because she is involved in the daily occurrences of the school. She does not just sit in her office doing paperwork, she is out visiting the classrooms working with the teachers and the children.

Betty stated that she responded well to the principal organizing the art materials because it revealed the principal's interest in what is happening in the school. The teacher indicated that she encourages the principal to continue to be involved by making the principal feel welcome and comfortable in her classroom.

Betty did not believe that the materials problem with the art curriculum has yet been solved. She indicated that there is only one art teacher's guide for each grade level, and sometimes she cannot find it exactly when she needs it. She claimed that sharing the guide does not always work well--each teacher needs to spend time getting to know the curriculum guide.

Betty believed that the principal organizing the art room worked because this made life easier for the teachers. Earlier, the principal stated that she provides whatever support is necessary to make the teacher's job easier.

Betty indicated that the principal knows that teaching is a hard job. If materials are available immediately, then the teachers do not have to spend valuable time looking for them. As a result, Betty does not believe the principal could have been helpful in a more effective way.

During the interview, Betty also extended her discussion to the principal's involvement with the children. Betty believed that this principal is available to the children as well as to the teachers. The children frequently go to the principal to read to her. For example, Betty related an occasion when one of her students was welcome to read to the principal even though the superintendent was in the office with the principal. According to Betty, the children benefit when the principal listens to them read. The children make the extra effort and the principal sees how they are progressing first hand. Betty stated that she values the time the principal spends with her students, believing that the principal has a positive influence on them.

Conclusions Drawn. The conclusions from this case study about the teachers' views concerning the role of the principal in curriculum implementation are as follows.

1. Teachers' view of the principal's role

Although the teachers selected different roles as the principal's priority, they basically discussed the same factors. First, the teachers believe that the principal's role is to make life easier for staff and students by ensuring that the school is run smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Second, they also view the principal's job as very demanding requiring her to either divide her time equally between the roles or delegate some of the responsibilities to the assistant principal and to teachers. Third, they believe that the principal influences curriculum implementation by being available to talk whenever they need her.

The teachers were very hesitant to discuss details of the principal's roles and responsibilities. Since these teachers had never filled a principalship, they were not familiar with a principal's roles and responsibilities.

2. Teachers' view of effective assistance

The principal makes the teachers' lives easier by being available to them whenever they need her. They both indicated that the principal's open-door

policy is important to them. This is illustrated by two points the teachers raised. First, they actually do go to the principal with their problems. Second, the teachers accept the suggestions the principal provides them.

3. Teachers' view of the principal

The teachers are willing to go to the principal and accept her suggestions because they view this principal as a colleague they can trust with their problems. The basis for this trust may be the principal's own experiences as a teacher and/or the teacher's lack of fear of being evaluated. As a result, a positive school atmosphere may prevail enabling the teachers to approach the principal for assistance.

4. Teachers' view of curriculum implementation

Although the teachers discuss their problems with the principal, they have difficulty identifying incidents. During the interviews, the teachers expressed difficulty recalling two incidents. Since the teachers could only identify one problem, the interviewer requested their reaction to an incident previously identified by the principal. This could suggest that: 1) teachers do not have implementation problems; 2) they do not know they had problems; or 3) they were not willing to discuss them.

Also, this raises questions about how teachers interpret curriculum implementation. First, are teachers making a distinction between a document (curriculum guide) and the curriculum in action? Second, do they view implementation very narrowly (e.g., dictionary skills) or broadly (e.g., the interpretation of the intent of the curriculum)? If teachers view curriculum implementation narrowly, they may not think of it as being difficult.

Discussion concerning this school. The high degree of congruence in this school is demonstrated in several ways. The principal and the teachers in this school agree on several points. First of all, the principal and the teachers basically agree that the principal's main role is to ensure that the school is running smoothly and is a happy place for staff and students. Second, the principal and the teachers agree that the principal's open-door policy provides

effective assistance. Third, the principal and teachers believe that the teachers are competent. The principal waits until the teachers approach her for suggestions, she does not impose her ideas upon them. She believes that the teachers are sufficiently competent to know when they need help. The principal also encourages the teachers to become more involved in decision making by participating in subject-area committees. The teachers believe they are competent because they feel they can implement curricula without much difficulty. The major roadblocks they identify are the availability of materials and the use of alternate teaching strategies, which are fairly narrow interpretations of curriculum.

The above discussion leads to the consideration of school atmosphere. It appears that the principal is working hard to develop a positive school atmosphere that encourages collegiality. How does the school's atmosphere influence curriculum implementation? This is apparently a school where teachers would feel comfortable about going to work because it appears that they have the principal's support, trust, and respect. This provides teachers with the courage to take risks and try new things. They may also push their teaching abilities to the limit to promote a high standard of expectations for themselves and their students.

There are, however, interesting differences between the principal and the teachers. First of all, the principal was very comfortable with discussing curriculum implementation problems, whereas the teachers were very reluctant to do so. Why were the teachers reluctant to discuss these problems? Are they reluctant to provide insights to the interviewer, a virtual stranger? Are they more concerned with other aspects of their job? Could they have perceived that the interview required them to describe something profound? Their reluctance to discuss implementation problems raises many questions which may be difficult to answer.

Second, the principal and the teachers have different perspectives on curriculum implementation. The principal views curriculum implementation as

broad and complex, whereas teachers view curriculum implementation as narrow and specific. The principal has a legal responsibility to ensure that curriculum is implemented school-wide. Teachers focus primarily on their classroom. They discussed teaching strategies and problems caused by unavailability of materials. Does this imply that teaching strategies and materials matter to teachers while the curriculum as a whole does not matter as much? Furthermore, what impact does the principal and the teachers being on different wavelengths have on curriculum implementation?

A third difference to consider is the degree of comfort the participants displayed in discussing each other's roles. The principal was very willing to discuss the teachers' roles and the problems they encounter, whereas the teachers were reluctant to discuss the principal's role because they are not all that familiar with what the principal does. However, the teachers were willing to discuss the kind of person the principal is and the kind of help they find effective. Does this suggest that the teachers are not interested in what the principal does unless they are directly involved? Is it necessary for the principal to make her role more visible? How would the principal accomplish this? Would this have a greater impact on curriculum implementation or is this irrelevant?

Conclusions Related to Congruence Between Perceptions of Principals and Teachers

Returning to the study as a whole, both principals and teachers were involved in this study. The principals described incidents in which they believed they were being helpful to teachers. The teachers also described incidents in which they believed the principals were being helpful. The teachers and principals usually described different incidents which contain several similarities and differences. The conclusions drawn with respect to congruence between the principals' and teachers' perceptions of effective assistance are as follows.

1. In both sets of incidents, the principals' and teachers' perceptions are congruent in the following ways.

a. The principals' and teachers' incidents both cast the principal in a responder role; that is, the teachers informed the principals of their curriculum implementation problems.

b. Teachers experienced methodology problems more frequently than materials and interpretation problems.

c. Principals provided assistance either by responding to teachers' requests for specific help or by developing their own solutions.

d. When responding to requests for specific types of assistance, principals effectively assisted by being available, approving the purchase of materials, and by encouraging teachers to attend district inservices.

e. When responding to open-ended calls for help, principals effectively assisted by initiating school-wide projects, approving school inservices, and arranging grade-group meetings.

f. What frequently started as an individual problem became a school-wide solution.

g. A reason why the principals assisted teachers with curriculum implementation included supporting teachers to make life easier for them and for students.

2. The principals' and teachers' perceptions are incongruent in the following ways.

a. The teachers' incidents focused on how curriculum implementation problems affected them as individuals, whereas the principals' incidents usually maintained a school focus.

b. The principals' incidents indicated that the principals were interested in setting up a positive atmosphere in the school, whereas teachers are primarily concerned with their own classrooms.

c. The principals and teachers were asked to describe incidents that showed how the principal assisted with curriculum implementation.
The teachers mentioned that they get assistance from others as well.

Discussion Related to the Conclusions

These conclusions are very interesting to consider. While some of the findings are consistent with the literature, others are not.

One finding that is consistent with the literature is that principals and most teachers agree that teachers have problems with curriculum implementation and principals help teachers with these problems. Glickman (1989) indicates that schools will not improve unless "...teachers are given the choice and responsibility to make collective informed decisions about teaching practice" (p.8). According to both sets of incidents, principals and teachers perceive principals giving teachers the kind of help teachers want as effective assistance.

Both principals and teachers also agree that principals help teachers by encouraging the staff to work collaboratively. According to Rosenholtz (1989), one of the ways that principals establish collaboration is by

> making helping behaviors salient, necessary, and dominant features of school life....In addition to encouraging helping behaviors in collaborative settings, it seems that principals trust teachers' creative instincts as much--if not more--than their own. They therefore tend to relinquish their need for control and share technical responsibilities with them (p. 61).

This is supported by the principals' and teachers' reports of incidents that illustrate principals' frequent endeavors, as school-wide initiatives and grade-group meetings, to establish collaboration.

However, Fullan (1991) cautions that seeking school-wide consensus inhibits teacher creativity and allows for possible errors. "Instead of seeking widespread involvement in the use of a particular innovation, it may be more appropriate, especially in larger schools, to stimulate multiple examples of collaboration

among small groups of teachers inside and outside the school" (p. 137). The principals and teachers that participated in this thesis study reported examples of small group (grade groups) collaboration as well as school-wide endeavors.

Another finding that is consistent with the literature is that both principals and teachers believe that school should be a happy place to be for both staff and teachers. "Schools where people work together to confront their problems, where teachers have maximum autonomy to do their work but are collectively engaged in dialogue about the central problems of the school, are places that are more likely to be successful for the adults and the children" (Lieberman, 1986, p. 5). Both principals and teachers in the thesis study indicated that principals focus on developing a positive atmosphere that encourage collegiality. However, Fullan (1991) cites Hargreaves' distinction between "contrived collegiality" and "collaborative cultures" (p.136). According to Fullan (1991), Hargreaves views contrived collegiality as a set of specific procedures established for specific projects or events (e.g., scheduled meetings). On the other hand, collaborative cultures are viewed as deep, personal forms of interaction that is central to teachers' daily lives. Upon careful consideration, findings from the thesis study supports both contrived collegiality and collaborative cultures. For example, one may view the joint planning during grade-group meetings scheduled on Monday mornings as a "formal, specific bureaucratic procedure" (Fullan, 1991, cites Hargreaves, p.136), hence contrived collegiality. On the other hand, evidence of true collaboration (as seen by Hargreaves) is provided by the school previously described. The depiction of the principal and the teachers as being 'on the same wavelength' illustrates an ongoing working relationship, rather than occasional encounters during one-shot projects or events. The implications of the distinction between contrived collegiality and collaborative cultures may be far reaching and need to be considered in more depth.

Another finding that is consistent with the literature is the view that principals have of teachers and the view that teachers have of themselves. According to the participants of this study, teachers are viewed by principals as

autonomous, requiring support rather than supervision. This supports the idea proposed by Rubin (1987) that "perceptive principals...acknowledge the importance of teacher autonomy and specify expectations, but allow teachers to accomplish these expectations in whatever way they think best" (p. 174). The principals and teachers repeatedly indicated that teachers were highly competent in the classroom. Therefore, principals preferred to wait until teachers approached them with their problems concerning curriculum implementation. Then the principal would assist in the appropriate way.

Another finding that is consistent with the literature is that several teachers in the study indicated they frequently approached the principal for assistance because they believed they would not be formally evaluated. According to Lieberman (1986), "the more people work together, the more we have the possibility of better understanding these complex problems and acting on them in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect" (p. 6). However, much of the literature supports the finding that the role of the principal as evaluator is one of the causes of the adversarial stance between principals and teachers (Barth, 1990; Lieberman, 1986). This is inconsistent with the findings of this thesis study.

Up to this point the discussion has focused on the congruence between principals' and teachers' perceptions. The discussion will now shift to include the major incongruencies between principals and teachers. The first interesting difference relates to the kind of assistance principals and teachers perceive to be effective. Some principals reported teaching and modelling in the classroom as effective assistance, while the teachers did not refer to this as effective assistance when having problems implementing curricula. Instead, the teachers repeatedly reported the principal effectively assisting, in response to both specific requests and general calls for help, by being available to listen to their problems and/or to provide suggestions on how to solve these problems.

It is interesting to note that some principals apparently wish to be directly involved in the classroom. There may be any number of reasons for this. One may be that principals prefer direct contact with students in a classroom because

of their own experiences as teachers which they may miss. There is evidence to indicate that students benefit from principals remaining in close contact with them. According to Rossow (1990):

> The principal's relationship with students should be one in which the principal is seen as a staunch supporter of academic success. Each student should feel as though the principal in some way cares about him. The principal must be directly involved in both the subject-related and extra-curricular programs. (p. 156)

Another interesting difference between the principals' and teachers' perceptions is the issue of the principal initiating assistance. The principals did not report any incidents indicating that they initiated assistance that may have arisen from classroom observations. The reason for this may be that principal's do not view classroom observations as a method for uncovering curriculum implementation problems because they rely on teachers' approaching the principals when necessary. Lee (1991) presents another interesting view regarding classroom observations. He describes the classroom observation as a method of instructional leadership as impractical and inappropriate. According to Lee (1991), expecting the principal "to perform both facilitator/supporter and evaluator tasks is likely to create confusion and conflict about that person's role; such difficulty, in turn, influences how effectively the tasks can be performed" (p.84).

Related Factors Operating Within a School

The fourth research question raised in this study is as follows.

> What factors are operating within a school that are related to the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation?

Although the question focused on internal factors, it turned out that one factor was internal to the school and one factor was external. In the section that follows the presentation of the data focuses on: 1) an internal factor--school size; and 2) an external factor--district inservices. Whole or partial descriptions from the researcher's notes will be used to exemplify findings.

An Internal Factor: School Size

At the beginning of the principals' interviews, the principals were asked questions related to the demographics of their schools. A principal's answers to the interview questions assisted in determining whether or not any factors operating within the school influenced curriculum implementation.

Table 7 summarizes the school information provided by the principals. The following information is provided for each school: 1) grades attending that school; 2) student population, which is the number of students registered at that school; 3) number of administrators, which includes the principal and assistant principal/curriculum coordinator; 4) number of FT. teachers, which is the number of full-time classroom teachers; and 5) kinds of other staff members. Kinds of other staff members may include any combination of the following: 1) librarian or library technicians; 2) counsellor; 3) aides; 4) specialty teachers, e.g., music, academic challenge, or resource room; and 5) secretaries.

As shown in Table 7, all the schools, but one, are of similar size. Five of the schools involved in the study had a student population of approximately 300 to 400 students. However, one school's student population was significantly smaller, approximately 150 students.

School size can have an impact on how principals assist with curriculum implementation in three ways. First of all, school size influences the principal's roles and responsibilities. For example,

Table 7

School Information

School	Grades	Student Pop.	No. of Admin.	No. of F.T. Teachers	Kinds of Other Staff Members
1	K - 6	380	2	16	3
2	K - 6	148	1	7	1
3	1 - 6	350	2	17	4
4	K - 6	380	2	15	4
5	K - 6	295	2	17	3
6	K - 6	290	2	15	3

> Since this is a small school, this principal must perform several roles. The principal is also the school counsellor and librarian (assisted by parent volunteers). This school does not have an assistant principal. When the principal is required to leave the school, a teacher designate takes over for crisis purposes.

However, in larger schools some of the roles and responsibilities were delegated to other staff members. For example,

> The assistant principal helps teachers by providing suggestions to teachers on how to implement the computer curriculum and by ordering curriculum materials. The teacher-librarian also helps teachers with curriculum implementation by locating and ordering suggested materials.

Principals with larger student populations and subsequently more staff (administrative as well as teaching) were better able to assign responsibilities to various individuals or committees. The principal who had a smaller student population and less staff was required to do things in a different way. In this case the principal was required to wear many different hats (administrator, counsellor, librarian).

Second, school size influences the availablity of the principal. According to the principal of the small school, one way she assisted teachers with curriculum implementation is by being available and listening to teachers' concerns. However, both teachers in this school reported that the principal is often <u>not</u> available.

> According to Tom, the principal is absent from the school on a regular basis because of outside meetings. He believes that the principal is not always there when teachers and students need her or when school events have been previously planned. In his view, crisis situations are not dealt with by the principal as quickly as they should.

As well,

> According to Lena, "being around" is an aspect of the administration role which needs to be addressed. She claims the principal is not always there when crisis situations arise.

On the other hand, several of the teachers of larger schools reported that the principal was available to listen or make suggestions. For example,

> Kate believed that the principal's open-door policy helped because she felt at ease about going to the principal for help without any fear of her difficulties showing up on an evaluation. She did not believe that the principal could have been more effective. In Kate's view, principals are most effective by being available to talk when teachers have a problem.

Third, school size also has an impact on the number of classrooms at a grade level there are in that school. According to the principal of the small school, there is usually one classroom per grade level or frequently combined grades at this school. This limits the sharing of resources that can be done between teachers. The principal indicated that the teachers were sometimes able to visit teachers in other schools, but this also caused problems regarding release time.

Therefore, school size has an impact on the way in which the principal assisted with curriculum implementation. In a small school there are not always the kinds of staff available to assist teachers with their implementation problems when they need help. As in the case of this small school, the principal was frequently away and, therefore, not available to the teachers when they needed her. As well, the lack of other support staff members compounded the difficulty of teachers receiving help with curriculum implementation problems. Furthermore, the teachers were limited with the kinds of sharing they could do since there was usually one classroom per grade. Therefore, teachers needed to

visit a teacher of the same grade level at other schools to share ideas and materials.

An External Factor: District Inservices

As previously stated, during the interviews both the principals and teachers described how principals provided effective assistance with curriculum implementation. One of the ways was by the principal either encouraging teachers to attend district inservices or approving the teachers' specific requests to attend these inservices. Some principals and teachers would also request assistance from district consultants, whereupon the consultant would come into the school to inservice the teacher(s).

District inservices and/or consultants are utilized by principals as a form of assistance. Some principals believed that district inservices and/or consultants effectively assist teachers in becoming comfortable with the curriculum. For example,

> The teachers who taught combined classes (Grade 4/5 and Grade 5/6) were having a problem implementing the social studies curriculum. According to Brenda, the teachers were unsure about how to teach combined classes without repeating some units or omitting others. Both teachers approached her and discussed their concerns with her. Brenda believed the teachers were having a problem because they were anxious about ensuring that all the students complete the suggested units before they had to write the provincial exams in grade six.
>
> Brenda helped in three ways. First, she encouraged teachers to attend inservices and brought consultants into the school. The consultants worked with the teachers through the section of the guide that suggests ways of teaching the social studies curriculum with combined classes. Second, instead of having a staff meeting, the principal invited all the teachers to go with her to purchase new materials for social studies. Third, her formative teacher evaluations focused on social studies lessons. After her

observations, Brenda emphasized the ways each teacher was meeting the curriculum's goals.

In Brenda's view, she chose to help by encouraging teachers to attend inservices and bring consultants into the school because she hoped these teachers would become more comfortable with teaching the new curriculum to combined classes. Furthermore, rather than add on to teachers' workload, Brenda believed that purchasing materials as a staff instead of having a staff meeting was more helpful. Also, she believed that focusing upon observing social studies lessons as formative evaluations illustrated to teachers that the implementation of the social studies curriculum was important to her.

Brenda believed the teachers responded very positively to these kinds of help. According to her, the problem of teaching combined classes is solved. However, the problem of 'test-anxiety' was not solved for teachers. In Brenda's view, she helped alleviate some of their test anxiety by being available and listening to their concerns and providing whatever resources they want to use.

Brenda believed that these kinds of help work because teamwork is her focus. In her view, the more a principal cooperated with teachers and made life easier for them, the more efficient everyone becomes. Brenda would help in the same way with other curricula and other teachers because, in her view, teachers' needs are effectively met. As a result, Brenda's role in assisting teachers with curriculum implementation was to provide them with the time, opportunity, and resources to become comfortable with the curriculum.

In this incident, the principal supported district inservices and utilized them. This principal also provided other help that complemented the district support.

However, other principals do not believe that all inservices are worthwhile. A principal indicated that some inservices are not effective in assisting teachers. This principal believed cooperative learning and teacher effectiveness are aspects of curriculum implementation.

Cooperative learning. According to Daryl cooperative learning was being implemented on a district-wide basis. The district offered inservices,

which the teachers from Daryl's school had attended (he had encouraged the teachers to attend these inservices). However, in Daryl's view, the teachers returned frustrated, indicating that these inservices were not specific to their own grade-levels. Therefore, they approached Daryl, requesting help on how to implement cooperative learning in their own classrooms. Daryl believed that the teachers wanted to develop some units and specific lesson plans illustrating how to use cooperative learning in their own classroom.

In Daryl's view, he helped by providing some time for teachers at each grade level to develop unit plans. According to Daryl, the plans focused on using cooperative skills with research skills in social studies for several reasons. First, the teachers needed specific plans to incorporate cooperative learning into their classrooms. Secondly, the school's professional development day had focused on research skills, therefore, the teachers wanted to incorporate this as well. Third, the teachers believed that social studies was the subject area in which they could begin using cooperative learning and research skills.

Daryl believed he helped in this way because teachers needed to be encouraged to put what they had learned at inservices into practice. Without being provided the necessary time, Daryl does not believe the teachers would have taken the time nor the effort to use cooperative learning in the classroom.

According to Daryl, the teachers responded favorably to learning how to immediately practice cooperative learning in their classrooms. In his view, the teachers have been using cooperative learning in their classroom more than they would have otherwise. He did not believe the problem was completely solved. In his view, he will need to focus on assisting teachers with individual problems as they arise in their classrooms.

In addition, Daryl discussed the problems that inservices, in general, present for teachers. He explained that the school staff as a whole appreciate the district providing inservices during the day and providing substitute-teachers for classrooms. However, he believed that the district still fails to recognize three issues. First, the teachers need to spend extra time preparing more detailed lesson plans for the substitutes. Second, since substitute teachers did not always cover the teacher's plans, there was more work waiting for teachers when they return (adding to the time the would normally require). Third, teachers taking too much time away from classrooms while attending inservices (as in some cases) had been detrimental for students. According to Daryl, this could further be

compounded by teachers being frustrated when the information presented is too broad. Therefore, although he encourages teachers to attend inservices, he is concerned about the negative impact inservices have on teachers.

Teacher effectiveness. According to Daryl, teacher effectiveness training is currently occurring at the district level. Each school is represented by a small team at monthly meetings. During these meetings guest speakers present strategies that each team practices upon return to their school. The team practices the strategies while observed (by each other), discuss the effectiveness, and return to the next meeting with evaluations.

According to Daryl, their school team consisted of two teachers and himself. He believed his role was to observe the teachers and provide feedback on becoming better at the techniques they were practicing. He added that he also believed that his modelling of effective teaching strategies was important if the teachers were to consider better ways to deliver the curriculum.

In his view, working on teacher effectiveness with teachers is helpful because there is professional growth when dialogue occurs between school administrator and teacher or between teacher and teacher. Therefore, he believed that his role was to facilitate this dialogue.

Daryl explained that each team will be assisting their school with implementing teacher effectiveness at the school level. At this point the district will no longer be as involved. Daryl believed that problems would arise because the schools would need to obtain financial resources to bring in guest speakers and substitute teachers for other teachers to go through the process. He stated that he was still unsure how he would be handling this at his school.

It is interesting that this principal had mixed feelings about teachers attending inservices. He pointed out that the district initiated the inservices, and while he encouraged teachers to attend, he did not believe inservices were effective. However, in the second situation, this principal appeared to rely on the district inservices.

Therefore, district inservices and/or consultants are a form of external assistance utilized by principals when helping teachers with implementing new or revised curricula.

Conclusions Related to Factors Operating Within a School

The conclusions drawn with respect to the factors operating within a school are as follows.

1. School size was an internal factor which influenced the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation.
   a. Small school size had an impact on the principal's roles and responsibilities. The principal in a small school was required to perform counselling and librarian, as well as administrative, duties.
   b. School size also had an impact on the way in which the principal assisted teachers with curriculum implementation. According to the teachers of the small school, the principal frequently was unavailable when they needed her.
   c. School size also determined the number of classrooms per grade level. In smaller schools, teachers were able to share ideas and materials by sometimes visiting teachers at other schools.
2. A factor operating outside the school was also identified. District inservices and/or district consultants are external factors that influenced the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation. Principals frequently utilize district inservices and/or district consultants to assist teachers with curriculum implementation.

Discussion Related to the Conclusions

The researcher found the following conclusions to be consistent with the literature. The interview responses revealed that school size was a factor that was related to the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation. Some of the literature refers to such benefits of small school size as collegiality (Rosenholtz, 1989) and ease of teaching (Goodlad, 1984). However, Holdaway (1988) found "strong support for schools which can accommodate about 300-400 students. Such schools could have two to three classes in each of the K-6 grades and would appear to have the characteristics of program breadth, flexibility, efficiency, and effective interaction...among administrators, teachers and students" (p.5). The finding that teachers of the small school (with 148 students) having to go to other schools to observe other teachers and share ideas, supports Holdaway's findings.

Another factor that was related to the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation was district inservices and/or consultants. This raises the question of where the responsibility for assisting teachers with curriculum implementation actually lies. Is it the province, from which most curricula originate? Is it the districts, who hire and oversee personnel? Or is it the principal of the school which is considered to be the unit of change?

> As things now stand, teachers acquire much of their technical insight informally from other teachers. Most would readily welcome better training. What they seek, in the main, however, are hands on techniques which are readily implemented. As a consequence much of staff development remains largely ad hoc. Programs tend to be initiated on a random basis; the training is likely to focus on one current fad or another; and, too often, token activities substitute for genuine endeavors. (Rubin, 1987, p.175)

Principals and teachers believed that usually district inservices and/ or consultants were an effective form of assistance. However, this is not always the case. As some principals indicated, some situations require more that solely one kind of assistance to implement curricula. Therefore, principals and teachers

should utilize whatever resources, such as district inservices, are available to them.

Furthermore, even though principals were not always knowledgeable about all curricula, they assisted teachers as best they could when they received the call for help. These principals did not withhold their support because they did not know all there was to know about curriculum. Instead they found other avenues, such as district inservices, to assist teachers. "While the propositions that principals cannot be experts in all subject areas (e.g., physics) and cannot be heavily involved in all tasks are defensible, denial of the need for principals to be active in the overall processes of improvement of programs and instruction is unacceptable" (Holdaway, 1988, p.3). The study indicated that there were means and ways for principals to assist teachers with curriculum implementation without being completely knowledgeable about that particular curriculum. Therefore, principals relying on district inservices as a form of assistance with curriculum implementation can be viewed as effective.

Principals' Assistance Related to Their View of Their Role

The last research question raised in this study is as follows.

Is the principals' assistance with curriculum implementation related to their view of their other roles and responsibilities?

The following section contains the answers to this question. It begins with the principals' role priority that each principal and teacher identified and continues with the impact the principal's dominant role has on the way the principal helped teachers implement curricula. Throughout this section comparisons are drawn between principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principals' roles and responsibilities.

The Principals' Role Priority

During the interviews, the researcher requested the principals and teachers to respond to three particular roles performed by principals--instructional leadership, management, and administration. The following cards were presented to each participant:

Card 1:

Instructional Leadership - the principal's role in facilitating the implementation of new or revised curricula to meet student needs.

Examples - planning for inservicing of teachers
- communicating goals to parents
- establishing ways of evaluating students and programs

Card 2:

Management - the principal's role in the allocation of educational resources.

Examples - establishing yearly priorities
- setting budgets for materials and/or personnel
- keeping track of how funds are spent

Card 3:

Administration - the principal's role in the smooth running of day-to-day school operations.

Examples - timetabling
- supervising (hallway, playground, etc.)
- disciplining students
- submitting routine reports (student enrollments)

Following a brief discussion of the roles, the participants were asked to fill out the following "Principal's Roles" form:

Principal's Roles

	Degree of Importance					Time Spent				
	low				high	low				high
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
ADMINISTRATION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

With 1 being "low" and 5 being "high", the principals and teachers were asked to circle the number which most closely represented: a) how important the principal believed each role was; and b) the amount of time the principal spent performing each role. Upon completion of this form, the researcher asked each participant to clarify the principal's dominant role. The researcher determined from the forms and the respondent's verbal confirmation the principal's role priority.

Table 8 shows a comparison of the principal's priorities reported by the principaland the teachers of each school. The X's represent the priority, either instructional leader, manager, administrator, as reported by the principal (Pr.) or teacher (T.1 or T.2) of that school.

A discussion regarding the principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's role is provided as follows: 1) the principals' perceptions; 2) the teachers' perceptions; and 3) consistency among principals and teachers.

Table 8

A Comparison of the Principals' Priority

Participant	Instructional Leader	Manager	Administrator
Sch. 1:			
Pr.		X	
T.1			X
T.2			X
Sch. 2:			
Pr.	X		
T.1			X
T.2			X
Sch. 3:			
Pr.	X		
T.1	X		
T.2	X		
Sch. 4:			
Pr.	X		
T.1	X		
T.2			X
Sch. 5:			
Pr.			X
T.1			X
T.2			X
Sch. 6:			
Pr.	X		
T.1		X	
T.2	X	X	X

Principals' perceptions. Table 8 shows that the principals most frequently believed their priority was instructional leadership. Only one principal chose management and one other chose administration.

According to the principals, they focused on particular responsibilities, depending on their role priority. Each of the roles will be discussed in further detail to illustrate the various duties performed by a school principal. The following examples are excerpts from the researcher's notes of the interviews. They are not direct quotations.

1. Instructional leadership is "the principal's role in facilitating the implementation of new or revised curricula to meet student needs." According to one principal,

> Daryl's priority as a principal is instructional leadership as indicated by degree of importance (5) which he ascribes to that role. Also, he perceives he spends more time performing the management role (4) and the administration role (5) than the instructional leadership role (3). However, he perceives that the management and administration roles are slightly less important (both 4).
>
> Daryl believes he spends a great deal of time in all roles which he finds difficult to separate. In his view, the management and administration responsibilities must be dealt with as they arise, otherwise the school could not function. Therefore, he claims he deals with situations (concerning students, parents, or school guests) as they arise leaving very little time to adequately perform the instructional leadership role. For example, Daryl explained that the parents of the students who attend the school have very high expectations regarding their children's achievement. As a result, a great deal of pressure is placed on the students, teachers and school administration. However, Daryl believes that rather than being concerned about the content of curriculum, elementary students should be encouraged to enjoy their school lives more and focus on pro-social skills (e.g., learning to get along with each other).
>
> According to Daryl, large blocks of time are necessary to perform the instructional leadership role. As instructional leader, he believes that modelling for teachers in the classroom is important. He indicated that this is the emphasis of the effective teaching workshops that he is currently involved in with two teachers from his school.

Daryl also believes that as instructional leader a principal should be aware of all that is happening with curricula at the school level, at the district level, and at the provincial level. He provided two examples of how he is involved in one subject area. First, he served on the Materials Selection Committee for elementary math with Alberta Education. Second, he will be serving on a committee to evaluate the math program in another jurisdiction. Daryl believes that these two opportunities will enable him to share this expertise with the teachers when they need assistance implementing the upcoming revised math curriculum.

According to Daryl, most importantly, he would like to see himself in the classroom more often, talking and working with teachers and students to provide the best program possible. Currently, district policy requires that he evaluate six teachers per year. Therefore, he ensures that these evaluations are scheduled and completed. However, he disagrees that formally evaluating teachers is an effective way of assisting teachers implement curriculum. Instead, he believes that principals should be providing ongoing feedback, or making it possible for other teachers to peer teach, to teachers regarding curriculum and other classroom matters in an informal setting. He added that he focuses on the instructional leadership role when teachers are having problems with materials or implementing a new program. Otherwise, the management and administration roles demand too much of his time because they are more immediate.

Since he believes his main responsibility is to ensure that the students receive the best education possible, he focuses on: 1) obtaining good teachers for the school; 2) timetabling; 3) budgeting; 4) providing adequate allocation of resources; and 5) ensuring that all facilities are well-maintained. That is,

> "I am here to make sure that the students, the students that we have at our school, are getting the best education possible. And it's my responsibility, therefore, to make sure that we have a good staff and that all the facilities are up to snuff; the timetabling, and the budgeting, and the allocation of resources are the best that I can provide (pause) so the kids benefit."

This principal believed his dominant role to be instructional leadership, focusing on what was best for the students. However, he was also very aware of the time constraints placed on principals in performing all the roles. It is also interesting to note that this principal believed that principals should know what

is happening with all curricula at the school, district, and provincial levels.

2. Management is "the principal's role in the allocation of educational resources." As manager, one principal described her responsibilities in this way.

> Fran's priority as a principal is management as indicated by degree of importance (5) and amount of time (4) which she ascribes to that role. Although she perceives the instructional leadership role (5) to be as important, she spends less time performing this role (3). However, she perceives the administration role (2) to be less important (2) and she spends less time performing this role (2).
>
> Fran believes that as a result of school-based budgeting, she spends most of her time performing the management role. Therefore, in her view she ensures that the school day runs as smoothly as possible with very few disruptions for teachers. She also works on making the school a happy place for both teachers and students.
>
> However, Fran believes that the management and instructional leadership roles are inseparable. According to her, instructional leadership is her focus while performing management roles. As a manager, she anticipates the provision of: 1) necessary resources; 2) consultants and/or information on inservices; and 3) school-wide planning of similar projects. She also believes that instructional leadership responsibilities include anticipating the needs of her staff as she goes through each teacher's yearly long term plans.
>
> In Fran's view, she does not need to spend a great deal of time performing the instructional leadership role because of assistance she has with this role. As previously indicated, instructional leadership responsibilities are delegated to the curriculum coordinator and the professional development committee (established by the principal). While the curriculum coordinator spearheads curriculum changes, the professional development committee offers school inservices to teachers. Fran indicated that even though teachers are informed of changes by the curriculum coordinator, Fran must have firsthand knowledge concerning these changes. Fran explained that, when asked, she also has input into professional development. She encourages this committee to focus inservices on aspects of the school's priorities and goals.
>
> Furthermore, Fran believes that the amount of assistance she provides with curriculum implementation depends upon the type of change. In her view, many of the curriculum changes are not that drastic; therefore, she does not need to have that much input. Instead, she focuses on being a role model

> for teachers who are having difficulties with teaching strategies and/or planning. She may occasionally go into a classroom to teach while the teacher observes.

This principal reported that she focused on management but also believed that instructional leadership was as important.It is interesting to note, however, that, as important as instructional leadership was, several of the responsibilities were delegated to other staff members.

3. Administration is "the principal's role in the smooth running of day-to-day school operations." According to one principal, whose priority is administration, the roles and responsibilities are focused upon as follows.

> Steve's priority is administration as indicated by degree of importance (4) and amount of time (5) which he ascribes to that role. However, according to Steve, the management and instructional leadership roles (both 4) are as important as the administration role, just performed at different times. Steve believes he spends less time in the instructional leadership (2) and management (1) roles. He spends time in different roles at different times of the year (the emphasis on the role is determined by the tasks required at a certain time; e.g., timetabling - August; budgeting - February).
>
> In Steve's view, it is impossible for any principal to be knowledgeable about all curricula. Therefore, assistance with curriculum is shared with the district, the assistant principal, the librarian, and the teachers. He believes he focuses on the following responsibilities: 1) being available and visible to students and teachers in and around the school; 2) timetabling; 3) setting the school's budget; 4) planning for the inservicing of teachers (school and district inservices); 5) attending to teacher requests for assistance (materials, student discipline, curriculum); and 6) maintaining close contact with parents. Other responsibilities are shared by the assistant principal, teachers and secretaries, as follows: 1) setting yearly priorities; 2) keeping track of funds; 3) supervising students on the playground and at bus arrivals/ departures; and 4) completing reports.

This principal reported that all three roles were equally important. However, he spent more time performing the administration role with emphasis

on other roles during different times of the year. It is interesting to note that this principal did not believe that principals could be knowledge about all curricula. Therefore, he indicated that assistance with curriculum implementation was shared with the district and amongst school staff.

Even though these principals have different role priorities, interesting similarities, as well as differences, exist. First of all, regardless of priority, principals focus on ensuring that the school is running smoothly and is a happy place for staff and students. Second, principals believe that all of their roles are almost equally important; however, role emphasis occurs at different times of the school year. Third, principals delegate several of their responsibilities to assistant principals, school secretaries, librarians, and teachers to ensure that as much as possible is accomplished.

However, there are also differences among the principals. First of all, principals do have different role priorities, although many perceive that they are instructional leaders. Second, principals have different views regarding their responsibility toward curricula. For example, even though principals generally believe that knowledge about all curricula is impossible, one principal suggested that principals should know what is happening with curricula at all levels.

Teachers' perceptions. Table 8 shows that teachers most frequently believed the principal's priority was administration, less frequently that the principal's priority was instructional leadership, and least frequently that the priority was management.

Teachers believed that, depending on the principal's perception of the principal's view of his/her role priority, principals focused on particular responsibilities. Each of the teachers' perceptions of the principal's roles will be discussed in further detail to illustrate the various duties teachers believe are performed by a school principal. The following examples are excerpts from the researcher's notes of the interviews. They are not direct quotations. These examples will be presented from a teacher of the same school as the principal previously noted.

1. The first principal presented believed that his priority was instructional leadership. However, a teacher from that school perceived the principal's roles in this way.

> Unlike the principal, Debi believes the principal's priority is management as indicated by degree of importance (4) and amount of time spent (5). Debi believes the instructional leadership and administration roles (both 4) are as important as the management role to the principal. She indicated, however, the principal spends less time performing the instructional leadership role (3) and administration role (2). According to Debi, the principal delegates most of the administration role to the assistant principal and, therefore, does not need to spend any time performing this role. Debi believes that the principal's priority is management because of the principal's emphasis on ensuring that the school is running smoothly. According to Debi, running the school effectively is like running a successful business. Therefore, she does not believe the principal could spend any less time performing this role and still have good management of the school. Debi also explained that since the principal is so low-key, she is not familiar with the details of the principal's responsibilities.

This teacher perceived the instructional leadership role to be as important as management to the principal but believed he spent less time performing this role. It is interesting to note that this teacher recognized that the principal ran the school as a successful business and delegated several responsibilities to the assistant principal. She also indicated that she was not familiar with all the duties performed by the principal and, therefore, struggled with this part of the interview.

2. The second principal discussed believed her priority was management. However, both teachers of that school perceived the principal's priority in this way.

> Unlike the principal, Wendy believes the principal's priority is administration as indicated by degree of importance (5) and amount of time spent (5). In Wendy's view, the principal places the same degree of importance (5) on the instructional leadership role, while the management

role is less important (3) to the principal. Wendy believes amount of time spent is instructional leadership (3) and management (2). According to Wendy, the daily smooth running of the school is of primary importance to the principal. Therefore, the principal is unable to spend as much time as she would like on the instructional leadership role because of time limitations.

Wendy believes that administration and instructional leadership work hand in hand which makes the school a better place to be. According to Wendy, the principal believes that if the staff is happy, the easier the job is for them. In Wendy's view, the principal is a good role model (e.g., the principal models an interest in writing) and a visible presence for teachers and students. For example, the principal promotes the value of writing and reading by: 1) establishing and overseeing the Author's Chair (every Friday, for approximately one hour, twenty-five students from Grades One to Six read the stories they have written); 2) inviting students to read their book reports over the intercom; and 3) reading selections from books over the intercom.

This teacher perceived that the daily smooth running of the school was of primary importance to the principal. She recognized the time constraints placed on principals to perform all roles and responsibilities. It is also interesting to note that the teacher believed the principal's desire to maintain a happy staff was important to the principal.

3. The third principal discussed believed his priority was administration. Both teachers of that school similarly perceived the principal's priority in this way.

Diane believes the principal's priority is administration (as, indeed, the principal stated) as indicated by degree of importance (5) and amount of time spent (5). In addition, Diane claims that the principal places an equal degree of importance on the instructional leadership and management roles (both 5). According to Diane, the principal spends less time (both 4) performing the instructional leadership and management roles because they do not occur on a daily basis.In her view, the management role is performed during certain times of the year. She also said that instructional leadership also involves short periods of time. According to her, the focus is

strong when new curricula arrive, but it gradually diminishes as teachers become more comfortable with teaching the curriculum.

Diane identified that, as administrator, the principal focuses on: 1) ensuring that the school is running smoothly; 2) timetabling (both regular school classes and special district classes); 3) assisting in the placement of students with learning difficulties; 4) establishing and maintaining adequate aide-time; and 5) ensuring adequate funding is available for regular and special classes.

As did the principal, this teacher perceived that all three roles are of equal importance to the principal but less time is spent on the instructional leadership and management roles. She also recognized that different roles were performed by the principal at different times of the year. This teacher was apparently aware of the emphasis the principal placed on certain responsibilities.

There are several similarities among the perceptions of the teachers. First of all, the teachers perceived that the smooth running of the school and staff happiness, regardless of role priority, was of primary importance to the principals. Second, teachers recognized that time constraints limited some roles performed by the principals. Therefore, they believed principals employed different strategies such as delegating several responsibilities to other staff members and focusing on particular roles at different times of the year. Third, since teachers have never been principals themselves, teachers in general feel they are unfamiliar with the details of the principal's job, although highly visible principals enabled teachers to recognize those responsibilities emphasized by those principals.

An interesting difference to note, and difficult to account for, is the teachers' interpretation of the principals' roles. Although, the teachers frequently talk about the same responsibilities, the labels (administration, management, instructional leadership) they placed on the responsibilities were different. The use of definition cards was an attempt to avoid such confusion. However, the confusion still exists for the researcher. Therefore, focusing on the responsibilities performed by the principal may be more helpful than attempting

to provide a consensual label.

Consistency among principals and teachers. As shown in Table 8, the principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's priority were consistent in only two schools (School 3 and School 5). These principals were the highly visible principals discussed earlier. In the other schools, the principal's and either one or both teachers' perceptions differed. The examples used in the previous paragraphs will also be referred to in this discussion.

According to the discussions, several principals and some teachers perceived that all roles are almost equally important to principals. However, principals spent more time performing one role over the others. According to principals and teachers, principals employed different strategies, such as delegation and different role emphasis, to ensure all roles were performed.

As indicated earlier, the principal and teachers of schools 3 and 5 were consistent in their perceptions regarding the principals' dominant role. It is interesting to determine the factors that relate to this consistency. For example, does the principal's visibility contribute to the common ground between principal and teachers? What impact does school atmosphere have on the perceptions of these individuals?

There are also interesting differences between the principals and teachers. First of all, the principals' and teachers' perceptions regarding the principal's role priority were sometimes different. Table 8 shows that principals frequently perceived instructional leadership to be their role priority, while teachers most frequently perceived administration to be the principals' role priority. This inconsistency arose from the differences in perceptions concerning the time the principal spent performing each role. The principals believed they were spending more time performing one role, while the teachers perceived that the principals spent more time performing another.

Another interesting inconsistency to note is the view of responsibility for curriculum implementation. Principals had differing views regarding their knowledge of all curricula. However, teachers did not refer to the need for the

principal to be 'all-knowing' as far as curricula was concerned. Some teachers implied that they preferred to be responsible, with the principals being available for any necessary support. For example,

> Karen believed that the principal's support and trust are effective because teachers feel they have a stake in the school. In her view, teachers feel that they are a part of a team and have a voice in making decisions that influence their classrooms. She does not think the principal could have been more effective other than making the materials herself. According to Karen, since teachers know what is necessary to implement curricula, principals are most effective by: 1) supporting and trusting teachers, and 2) providing time to talk things through so that teachers themselves can determine what is necessary. The principal showing support and empathy illustrates that the teachers' problems are important to the principal. According to Karen, principals do not necessarily need to go into the classroom and show teachers how to teach a particular lesson indicating to teachers that they have ownership and control over their situation.

Teachers prefer principals' support rather than direct intervention in the classroom. However, some principals indicated that in order to assist teachers with implementation, principals should know as much as possible about the curriculum.

Conclusions Related to the Principals' Role Priority

The conclusions drawn with respect to the principals' role priority are as follows.

1. Principals most frequently perceived that their dominant role was instructional leadership. They less frequently perceived their dominant role to be management or administration.

2. Teachers most frequently perceived that the principals' dominant role was administration. They less frequently perceived the principals' dominant role

to be instructional leadership and least frequently management.

3. Both principals and teachers perceived that all three roles were almost as important to the principal. However, differences in perceptions existed regarding the time spent performing each role.

4. The principals' and teachers' perceptions concerning the principals' role were consistent in only two of the schools studied.

5. Regardless of role priority, principals and teachers agree that principals focus on ensuring that the school is running smoothly and is a happy place for staff and students.

6. While principals differ in their view regarding how familiar principals should be with the content of all curricula, teachers do not refer to the need for the 'all-knowing' principal.

Priority Influences on Assistance with Curriculum Implementation

At the end of the interview, each participant was asked to identify the ways in which the principal's role priority influenced the assistance with curriculum implementation which the principal provided to teachers. The data will be organized around the three major roles discussed previously.

1. As instructional leaders, some of the principals reported that they assisted teachers with curriculum implementation by providing necessary support (emotional and/or financial), additional time, and ongoing communication. For example,

> As an instructional leader, Daryl influences curriculum implementation by: 1) providing teachers with the time, motivation, and support for practicing what they have learned at inservices; 2) facilitating teacher effectiveness; and 3) assisting teachers with considering ways to better deliver the curriculum.

According to one teacher from the same school,

> Debi is in agreement with Daryl that, as manager, the principal influences curriculum implementation by encouraging teachers to attend inservices. Debi identified the following additional point which the principal had not mentioned. She believed the principal influences curriculum implementation by providing funds for curriculum materials and school workshops.

Another principal, whose role priority is instructional leadership, reported the following.

> As instructional leader, Anne believed she influences curriculum implementation by knowing what is coming down from Alberta Education and facilitating the process by: 1) encouraging teachers' participation in school decision- making and program planning; 2) initiating discussions at staff meetings; and 3) providing teachers with some time for grade-group meetings.

According to a teacher from the same school,

> Irene is in agreement with Anne when she believed that as instructional leader, the principal influences curriculum implementation by: 1) encouraging teacher participation in school decision-making and program planning; and 2) initiating discussions about curriculum at staff meetings. Irene identified the following additional points which the principal had not mentioned; that is, the principal also influences curriculum by: 1) believing in the curriculum change; 2) promoting the change gradually rather than pressuring the teachers to implement immediately; and 3) supporting the teachers throughout the change (e.g., encouraging inservices).

2. As a manager, one principal similarly reported that she assisted teachers with curriculum implementation by providing necessary support (emotional and/or financial), additional time, and ongoing communication. For example,

As a manager, Fran influences curriculum implementation by: 1) ensuring that resources are available as teachers request for inservices, materials, fieldtrips, and guest speakers; 2) providing teachers with necessary release time (subs for their classrooms); and 3) providing teachers (and parents) with necessary information regarding school matters (directly or through the curriculum coordinator).

According to a teacher from that school,

Wendy is in agreement with Fran when she believed the principal influences curriculum implementation by: 1) informing teachers of curriculum changes; and 2) encouraging teachers to attend inservices. Wendy identified the following additional point which the principal had not mentioned. Wendy believed the principal also influences curriculum implementation by supporting teachers throughout the change, checking with the teachers to 'see how things are going'.

3. As an administrator, one principal reported that he assisted teachers with curriculum implementation by providing necessary support (emotional and/or financial), additional time, and ongoing communication. For example,

As administrator, Steve influences curriculum implementation by: 1) encouraging teachers to attend district inservices; 2) approving the purchase of materials; and 3) being available to and supporting teachers throughout a curriculum change.

According to a teacher from that school,

Diane is in agreement with Steve when she believed that, as administrator, the principal influences curriculum implementation by: 1) being available to and supporting teachers throughout a curriculum change; 2) approving the purchase of materials; and 3) encouraging teachers to attend inservices. Diane identified the following additional points which the principal had not mentioned. Diane believed the principal also influences curriculum implementation by: 1) making teachers aware of the content of the Program

of Studies; and 2) allowing teachers to modify the curriculum as they see fit.

There are several points that should be mentioned. First of all, even though some principals perceived they had different role priorities, they assisted in similar ways.

Second, it is interesting to note that, while assisting, some principals' focus may be different than others. This does not only occur with the two principals whose dominant role was management or administration, but also with the four principals who indicated that their dominant role was instructional leadership. For example, the manager focused primarily on financial support, providing teachers with release time and keeping teachers informed. The administrator focused on providing support by being continually available and approving purchases and encouraging teachers to attend district inservices. The focus of the instructional leaders varied from providing general financial support and ongoing communication to specifically communicating their beliefs on what is best for the students and valuing the curriculum. That is, emphasizing the importance of the curriculum and, any upcoming curriculum changes, to teachers. Therefore, the principals' dominant role did not have an impact on the ways principals assisted teachers with curriculum implementation. These differences may occur because of differences in the principals' backgrounds or perhaps the principals' personalities contribute. However, there is not sufficient data on which to base such conclusions.

Third, although teachers frequently perceived the principals' role priorities to be different, their beliefs concerning the ways principal helped were consistent with the principals' beliefs. However, several teachers identified additional ways principals helped that principals had not mentioned.

Therefore, role priority does not necessarily influence the ways principals assist with curriculum implementation. Principals believed that they assisted teachers with curriculum implementation by providing the necessary support,

time and ongoing communication. Teachers' perceptions of the ways the principal influenced curriculum implementation are generally consistent with the principals', although teachers added ways the principal helped which were not mentioned by their particular principals.

Conclusions Related to Role Priority Influences on Assistance with Curriculum Implementation

The conclusions drawn with respect to ways in which the principals' role priority influenced assistance with curriculum implementation are as follows.

1. Role priority does not appear to influence the ways in which principals assist teachers with curriculum implementation. The principals appeared to be more concerned about school atmosphere than solving curriculum implementation problems.

2. Not all principals perceive themselves as instructional leaders. However, they similarly assisted by providing various kinds of support, providing additional time for various activities, and ensuring ongoing communication.

3. Within a school, the teachers' perceptions of the the principal's role priority frequently differed from the principal's perceptions. However, teachers' perceptions regarding the ways principals assisted were consistent with the principals' perceptions. In addition, teachers reported additional ways in which the principals helped that the principals had not mentioned.

Discussion Related to the Conclusions

The researcher found the conclusions to be thought-provoking in several ways. While some conclusions are consistent with the literature, others are not.

One finding that is consistent with the literature is that the ways in which principals assist with curriculum implementation is not determined by the principals' role priority. The data provided by both principals and teachers indicated that there was not a simple correspondence between the principal's dominant role and ways the principal assisted with curriculum implementation. Therefore, such labels as 'instructional leader', 'administrator' or 'manager' may not be helpful in illustrating the ways principals help. Fullan (1991) cites research that "warns us not to judge a principal superficially or by single stereotype (for example, the flamboyant visionary). Research that lumps together principals who are involved in innovations may result in misleading findings" (p. 160). The results from this study support this finding. Identifying a principal's role priority did not clarify ways in which principals assist with curriculum implementation. Furthermore, those principals who perceived their dominant role as instructional leadership used varying kinds of assistance.

Another finding that is consistent with the literature is that the teachers' perceptions regarding role priority were frequently inconsistent with the principals' perceptions.

> A number of studies have suggested great potential the principal possesses to influence acceptance or rejection of curriculum change if he or she assumes the role of instructional leader in the school. The principals in this study held the self perception of being instructional leaders, but there was obvious lack of agreement on the part of the teachers. The potential unless the principal not only thinks he or she is an instructional leader but is acknowledged in that role by the staff (Nicholson & Tracy, 1982, p.72).

Interview responses revealed that teachers frequently did not acknowledge principals as instructional leaders. However, teachers' perceptions of ways principals assisted them with curriculum implementation were consistent with the principals' perceptions.

Furthermore, principals and teachers indicated that teachers were effectively assisted with curriculum implementation, not only by principals who perceived themselves as instructional leaders, but also by principals who perceived themselves as managers and administrators. Effective assistance was

based not necessarily on the principal's role priority, but on the atmosphere the principal created in the school. Recent literature refers to empowerment as one way of creating a positive school atmosphere. According to Sergiovanni (1987), "teachers need to be empowered to act--to be given the necessary responsibility that releases their potential and makes their actions and decisions count" (p.341). This is supported by the study finding that several teachers approached the principals with not only their curriculum implementation problems, but also provided solutions they believed would work. The atmosphere of these schools enabled the teachers to take the initiative to arrive at their own solutions to their problems.

Another way of creating a positive school atmosphere is through the principal caring about the staff and students of that school. "The principal's genuine concern for health, welfare and personal growth of each staff member becomes a symbol of persons caring about one another in the school environment" (Andrews, Basom, & Basom, 1991, p.98). Several teachers in this study commented on such benefits as belonging, regarding their principal as a caring individual.

According to Glickman (1989), the principal is not viewed as the only instructional leader. Instead, teachers are jointly responsible for such tasks as curriculum implementation and professional development. "...The principal need no longer be the 'headmaster' or 'instructional leader', pretending to know all, one who consumes lists from above and transmits them to those below. The more crucial role of the principal is as <u>head learner</u>, engaging in the most important enterprise of the schoolhouse--experiencing, displaying, modelling, and celebrating what it is hoped and expected that teachers and pupils do" (Barth, 1990, p.45). The teachers, who participated in this study, did not refer to the need for the principal to be "all-knowing." Instead the teachers identified those helping behaviors that they believed were effective. For example, some teachers reported that the principal effectively assisted by: ensuring that all teachers know that the principal values the curriculum; being available and

supporting teachers throughout the curriculum change; and by being visible to both teachers and students.

A finding that is inconsistent with the literature involves delegation. According to Hoy and Sousa (1984), while many principals were willing to solicit information from teachers on upcoming decisions, "most did not assign even such tasks as deciding to introduce a new course or program, or deciding which supplies or materials to use--let alone delegate decisions involving the selection of teachers or the internal allocation of funds" (p. 328, 329). However, in this study several principals and teachers indicated how the principals delegated responsibilities to effectively assist with curriculum implementation. For example, one teacher identified delegation as an effective way of influencing curriculum implementation. According to this teacher the principal is in the position of knowing who the person would be to help teachers implement particular curricula.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section outlines the research problem, summarizes the methodology which was used to investigate the problem, and presents the conclusions drawn from the study findings. A discussion dealing with the researcher's impressions of the study is presented in the second section. The final section contains recommendations for the principal, as well as recommendations for further research.

Summary of Research Problem, Methodology, and Conclusions

The literature review contains an investigation of the role of the principal as instructional leader. However, little has been done to discern the ways principals as instructional leaders facilitate curriculum implementation in particular. This study was, therefore, undertaken to learn about the ways in which principals assist teachers with curriculum implementation which both principals and teachers perceive as effective. Another aspect that has not been studied is the ways the principal assists with curriculum implementation in the context of the principal's other roles and responsibilities. Therefore this study investigates how the principal's roles and responsibilities influence the ways in which the principal assists with curriculum implementation.

Five research questions were formulated which served as a guide for the research.

1. What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that principals perceive as effective?

2. What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that teachers perceive as effective?
3. Is there congruence between principals' and teachers' perceptions of the assistance with implementation which principals give to teachers?
4. What factors are operating within a school that are related to the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation?
5. Is the principals' assistance with curriculum implementation related to their view of their other roles and responsibilities?

The study sample consisted of the principals and twelve selected teachers in six elementary public schools in three jurisdictions. Schools were randomly selected from a list of those schools which contained grades K or 1 through 6 and had a principal with at least two years experience. The participating principal of each school assisted with the selection of two teachers who had permanent teaching certificates and had taught in that school for at least two years.

Data were collected through personal interviews which were audiotaped. The researcher followed an interview schedule (one for principals and a similar one for teachers) which had been developed and revised after pilot testing (Appendices A and B). Probing questions were used to clarify responses provided by the participants. Participants were also asked to fill out a response form that was used to determine the principal's priority and the ways in which the principal assisted as a result.

Data analysis involved listening to and taking notes from the tapes to obtain statements that answer the research questions. The researcher analyzed the data in two ways. First, the data was analyzed separately for each school in order to identify factors operating at the school level which influence the principal's role in curriculum implementation. Second, the following data from all schools were pooled in order to arrive at generalizations about the principals' assistance with curriculum implementation.

Conclusions Related to the Research Questions

The conclusions related to the five research questions are contained in this section. They are based on the critical incidents described by principals and teachers.

Question 1. What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that principals perceive as effective?

1. The principals were responders rather than initiators. The principals waited for teachers to approach them with their implementation problems and then the principals provided the assistance. The principals did not mention a more proactive stance such as identifying problems with curriculum implementation encountered through classroom observations.

2. There were more requests for specific kinds of help than for general assistance. The principals believed that they provided effective assistance with curriculum implementation by responding to both kinds of requests.

3. When a teacher asked for a specific type of assistance, principals gave that kind of help to that individual. The teachers frequently asked for the following types of assistance which the principals provided: encouraging teachers to attend district inservices, being available to teachers, and approving purchases of materials. Teachers less frequently asked for principals to assist by teaching in the classroom, providing release time, and providing formative evaluations. Sometimes principals also responded by adding ideas of their own. For example, materials problems were usually solved by one-time, quick-fix solutions, such as approving funds for the purchase of materials and encouraging teachers to attend district inservices.

4. When the solution was left up to the principals, they usually provided assistance that applied to the whole staff. The principals believed they were offering effective assistance more often when they: initiated school-wide projects, arranged school inservices, arranged grade-group meetings, and identified or developed student programs. Such solutions were required for most

methodology and interpretation problems. On some occasions principals also modelled in the classroom and located extra funds. The principals took individual problems and put them into a school context.

Question 2. What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that teachers perceive as effective?

1. When the teachers went to the principal for help, they usually asked for specific kinds of help rather than making general requests for assistance.

2. The teachers believed that principals effectively assisted them with curriculum implementation by: 1) providing teachers with what they specifically requested; 2) developing their own types of assistance when teachers informed them about a problem; and 3) initiating a school-wide project in which all teachers would take part. More teachers chose to report problems experienced by themselves personally. Sometimes that principal helped just that teacher but often included the staff as a whole.

3. The teachers believed that the principals effectively assisted by giving the type of help the teachers wanted. The teachers' specific requests included being available to listen or to provide suggestions, approving the purchase of materials and encouraging inservices and/or inviting in consultants. Teachers less frequently asked for release time and formative evaluations. For example, materials problems were usually solved by one-time, quick-fix solutions, such as approving funds for the purchase of materials.

4. When the teachers made a general request for assistance, the principals frequently assisted by being available to listen or to provide suggestions, initiating school projects, approving school inservices, and arranging grade-group meetings. Such solutions were required for some methodology and the interpretation problems. Teachers also reported that the principals sometimes helped by identifying programs and locating funds.

5. Some of the teachers did not approach the principal with their curriculum implementation problems. However, they believed that they received effective assistance in two ways. First, they believed that the principal helped

indirectly through established school policies. Second, they indicated that they received help from other principal-approved sources such as the vice-principal and the district consultant.

Question 3. Is there congruence between principals' and teachers' perceptions of the assistance with implementation which principals give to teachers?

1. In both sets of incidents, the principals' and teachers' perceptions are congruent in the following ways.

   a. The principals' and teachers' incidents both cast the principal in a responder role; that is, the teachers informed the principals of their curriculum implementation problems.

   b. Teachers experienced methodology problems more frequently than materials and interpretation problems.

   c. Principals provided assistance either by responding to teachers' requests for specific help or by developing their own solutions.

   d. When responding to requests for specific types of assistance, principals effectively assisted by being available, approving the purchase of materials, and by encouraging teachers to attend district inservices.

   e. When responding to open-ended calls for help, principals effectively assisted by initiating school-wide projects, approving school inservices, and arranging grade-group meetings.

   f. Frequently what started as an individual problem became a school-wide solution.

   g. A reason why the principals assisted teachers with curriculum implementation included supporting teachers to make life easier for them and for students.

2. The principals' and teachers' perceptions are incongruent in the following ways.

   a. The teachers' incidents focused on how curriculum implementation problems affected them as individuals, whereas the principals' incidents usually maintained a school focus.

   b. The principals' incidents indicated that the principals were interested in setting up atmosphere in the school, whereas teachers are primarily concerned with their own classrooms.

   c. The principals and teachers were asked to describe incidents that showed how the principal assisted with curriculum implementation. The teachers mentioned that they get assistance from others as well.

Question 4. What factors are operating within a school that are related to the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation?

1. School size was an internal factor which influenced the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation.

   a. Small school size had an impact on the principal's roles and responsibilities. The principal in a small school was required to perform counselling and librarian, as well as administrative, duties.

   b. School size also had an impact on the way in which the principal assisted teachers with curriculum implementation. According to the teachers in the small school, the principal frequently was unavailable when they needed her.

   c. School size also determined the number of classrooms per grade level. In smaller schools, teachers were able to share ideas and materials by sometimes visiting teachers at other schools.

2. A factor operating outside the school was also identified. District inservices and/or district consultants was an external factor that influenced the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation. Principals frequently utilized district inservices and/or district consultants to assist teachers with curriculum implementation.

Question 5. Is the principals' assistance with curriculum implementation related to their view of their other roles and responsibilities?

1. The different role priorities principals had were instructional leadership, management, and administration. The instructional leadership role was selected as a priority by most principals.

2. Role priority does not appear to influence the ways in which principals assist teachers with curriculum implementation. The principals, regardless of their role priority, appeared to be concerned about creating a positive school atmosphere.

3. Not all principals perceive themselves as instructional leaders. However, regardless of priority, they similarly assisted by providing various kinds of support, providing additional time for various activities, and ensuring ongoing communication.

4. Within a school, the teachers' perceptions of the the principal's role priority frequently differed from the principal's perceptions. However, teachers' perceptions regarding the ways principals assisted were consistent with the principals' perceptions. In addition, the teachers reported additional ways in which the principals helped that the principals had not mentioned.

Impressions of the Study

This section contains the researcher's impressions regarding several aspects of the study. The discussion will focus on whether or not findings occurred as anticipated, and whether or not principals operated as expected. The researcher's thoughts, as well as any questions raised by the researcher regarding the findings, will also be presented.

At the onset of the study, the researcher had anticipated several possible findings which did not occur. First of all, the researcher expected that teachers would have many incidents to report regarding problems they had with

curriculum implementation. This expectation came from preset notions the researcher had from her own experience as a teacher. However, several teachers said they could not recall two incidents related to this matter. Furthermore, several teachers mentioned that other teachers had similar problems implementing curricula. Teachers were apparently not comfortable with talking about implementation problems. Perhaps denying that curriculum problems exist and referring to others having similar problems is an indication that teachers can be uncomfortable about their expertise in implementing new or revised curricula.

This leads to consideration of the principals' view of curriculum implementation. As was anticipated, the principals in this study apparently had varying views regarding curriculum implementation. However, the researcher did not anticipate that most of the principals were not engaging the teachers in any analysis and evaluation of curricula. Instead, principals were responding to teachers' specific and open-ended calls for help. Most principals and teachers identified problems and respective solutions that frequently involved methodology and materials rather than interpretation. Many of the solutions identified by principals and teachers were one-shot solutions indicating that curriculum problems were frequently short-term rather than ongoing. That is, principals were apparently putting out brush fires rather than developing implementation policies or processes.

The researcher had also anticipated that more principals would be initiators of curriculum planning with respect to the schools' goals. However, the data showed that usually principals were responders assisting teachers by simply giving them what they asked for. It is interesting to note that teachers frequently took the initiative to arrive at their solutions to their implementation problems. They suggested the solutions they believed would work for them. Therefore, in addition to solving individual curriculum implementation problems, principals were interested in setting up a pleasant atmosphere in their schools.

The researcher had anticipated that there would be large differences between principals' and teachers' perceptions regarding the principal's assistance with curriculum implementation. As noted earlier, principals and teachers have different orientations. Principals focus on the school as a whole, while teachers focus on their classrooms. While there were several differences, the small number of dissenting views between principals and teachers was surprising. Instead, the principal and teachers of a school were frequently on the same wavelength. For example, principals and teachers often said the principal assisted effectively by ensuring that the school is running smoothly and by making life easier for staff and students. This leads to consideration of the importance of school atmosphere. Apparently principals were working hard to develop a positive school atmosphere that encourages collegiality. What impact does this have on curriculum implementation strategies? Do schools with a positive atmosphere have fewer problems implementing curricula?

Another finding that was not anticipated was that the principal's role priority does not necessarily influence ways in which the principal assists with curriculum implementation. Originally the researcher believed that principals who perceived themselves as instructional leaders would assist very differently than principals who perceived themselves as managers. The data showed that most principals perceived all roles to be almost equally as important. However, the time they spent performing each role varied. They focused on different roles at different times or delegated responsibilities to other staff members. Furthermore, the principal's role priorities did not necessarily determine the time spent performing each role. Frequently, principals spent more time performing the management and administration roles even though they perceived them as slightly less important than the instructional leadership role.

This raises a question regarding crisis management versus leadership and their relation to curriculum implementation. Is crisis management a factor in the frequent identification of short-term curriculum problems and one-shot solutions? Would leadership involve more analysis and evaluation of curricula?

What impact would this have on the kinds of curriculum problems identified and subsequently solved?

As a result of this study, the researcher's thinking has changed in several ways. First of all, the researcher no longer perceives curriculum implementation as limited to the classroom with that teacher being solely responsible for implementation. Instead of the isolated view of curriculum the researcher originally had, her view of curriculum has changed to whatever happens in the school that influences students. This involves not only curriculum documents that come down from Alberta Education, but also includes the way the staff interacts with each other and the various teaching and learning styles of teachers and students. Instead of viewing the classroom as the focal point of curricula, the researcher now views the school as the focal point of curricula. It is possible that those teachers in the study who indicated that they did not have curriculum implementation problems did so because of such factors as their expertise, initial assistance from the district, ongoing support from the principal, and continuous collaboration among teachers.

Second, with this in mind, the researcher's thinking regarding the principal's domain and the teacher's domain has also changed. The researcher no longer restricts principals to their offices and teachers to the classroom doing their respective jobs of running the school and of teaching. Many possibilities exist for both principals and teachers to collaborate on how best to work toward the benefit of students. For example, the researcher would like to see teachers share in decision making regarding school initiatives, while principals become frequent visitors in the classroom learning about the students. Realizing that time is a crucial factor for both principals and teachers, discovering ways of functioning in this capacity, in a non-overwhelming manner, is required.

Recommendations

This study was undertaken to gain an understanding of principals' effective assistance with curriculum implementation as perceived by both principals and teachers. Consequently, the major recommendations based on the findings from the study relate to the principals as instructional leaders within their schools. Recommendations are also made for further research related to the school principal.

For the Principal

The findings of this study showed that principals were responders when assisting with curriculum implementation. This was indicated by the principals waiting for teachers to come to them with their implementation problems. Furthermore, principals also stated that they were usually in a crisis management situation. That is, they were spending a great deal of time putting out brush fires. When teachers came to them with problems, principals would assist teachers by either giving them what they asked for or developing a plan of attack in response to that problem on a school-wide basis.

One reason that principals are taking a responder role may be that principals are not keeping abreast of current trends in curriculum and instruction. Therefore, principals may be reluctant to become actively involved in curriculum implementation, leaving implementation up to teachers' expertise.

Another reason may be that "there is a considerable gap between current knowledge about effective principals and the practices for training, selecting, managing, and supporting principals. For example, instructional management rarely plays an important role in the selection of principals" (Cohen, 1983, p. 32). Therefore, principals may be unsure as to what is required of them as instructional leaders.

However, the researcher recommends that principals change from a responder role to a proactive role. According to the study findings, principals are doing a great deal to set up a positive school atmosphere, but they need to go a step further. Rather than spending a large amount of time putting out brush fires, principals need to concentrate on developing broader plans which include clearly defined processes for curriculum implementation. In his review of research on effective schools, Cohen (1983) points out that "Not surprisingly, in light of the inherent constraints of the role, effective principals act rather than react, develop and articulate a vision of the school and let that vision guide their numerous daily activities" (p. 32).

One way around the position of continually having to put out brush fires is to ensure that there is a process for addressing the problems as they arise. Furthermore, everyone in the school should know this process, that is, what needs to be done and who is responsible for the necessary tasks. Therefore, the principal may wish to reduce direct involvement in attending to specific details and delegate tasks to other staff members instead.

In relation to curriculum implementation, principals could have everyone working together to establish specific strategies for an implementation process rather than allowing teachers to work individually on "reinventing the wheel." For instance, as some schools have already begun to do, teams or committees could be established to develop a process that would work for them. The process may include doing a strategic fit analysis which would involve the interpretation of a curriculum document to determine the kind of change that is required and what this change would mean to teachers and students. The process may also include establishing timelines and milestone dates for progress reviews which may identify early warnings as to whether or not problems may occur.

According to Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1990) the development/ improvement process engages groups of teachers in a school-improvement process to solve particular problems. Sparks and Loucks-Horsley also indicate that several factors need to be taken into consideration. First of all, principals

must be committed to the process which also involves sharing authority and providing financial resources as necessary for materials, visits to other schools, and consultants. Second, teachers must be given sufficient time to reflect, meet, develop, and evaluate. Third, principals must provide direction and, at the same time, allow for teacher decision making to adequately balance the process.

There is, however, a drawback to developing processes for addressing problems as they arise. This strategy waits for problems to occur, wasting resources on problems that may have been avoided. An alternate strategy may be to eliminate potential problems. This would involve identifying early warning signs of potential problems before they become problems. The findings of this study showed that teachers have three kinds of implementation problems: 1) interpretation; 2) methodology; and 3) materials. Schools usually know well in advance which curriculum will change and when the change will be mandated. Therefore, with these potential curriculum implementation problems in mind, principals and teachers can work together on implementation strategies prior to the year of implementation. For example, some schools put time and resources into an upcoming curriculum so that they are ready to effectively implement it. As a result, a possible crisis may be avoided. The process is in place. As each new or revised curriculum comes into the school, everyone knows the specific implementation process. While this process may need to be modified as time goes on, curriculum changes can take place with a minimum amount of disruption. Furthermore, the key here is collaboration.

Therefore, instead of dealing primarily with superficial implementation problems, such as materials, principals would capitalize on the school's established procedures by having teachers deal with interpretation problems collaboratively. As a result, the principal would be bringing the staff together through collaboration. Some of the teachers in the study did not identify problems with curriculum implementation. Possibly, these teachers may have been reluctant to discuss their implementation problems. In collaboration, the teachers could be drawn into discussing their problems so that teachers do not

feel inadequate regarding their expertise. Therefore, the researcher also recommends that principals focus on facilitating collaboration among teachers. That is, principals would concentrate on ways of encouraging collaboration amongst staff members through open communication, ongoing support, and the adequate provision of time. According to Fullan (1991),

> The role of the principal is not in implementing innovations or even in instructional leadership for specific classrooms. There is a limit to how much time principals can spend in individual classrooms. The larger goal is in transforming the culture of the school. If successful, it is likely that some advanced models of the future will show collaborative groups of teachers organizing and conducting learning, perhaps without the presence of the principal as we now know the role. The principal as collaborative leader portrayed above is the key to this future (p. 161).

The last recommendation is, what the researcher calls, "demystifying the principalship" for teachers; that is, taking the mystery away from what the principal does on a daily basis. According to the findings of this study, many were unclear about the principals' priority and what they spent their time on. While some principals may fiercely guard what they do to protect their position, others are receptive to letting teachers know what they do. As a result, an atmosphere of mutual trust may be created which in turn establishes a basis for teambuilding.

In order to effectively work as a team, principals need to develop strategies and processes, as previously discussed, with teachers. Teachers may then be provided with more insight into the nature of the principal's job. As a result, teachers can comfortably take part in making school-based decisions with principals. Shared decision-making may alleviate time pressures on principals.

For Further Research

The findings of this study offer some direction for further research. First of all, in the previous section the researcher recommended that principals take a

more active role in curriculum implementation. Therefore, schools where principals are proactive could be identified and case studies conducted illustrating what these principals do. A case study could provide information on how principals develop a school vision and how that vision guides day-to-day activities. Information on problem-solving strategies that either avoid potential problems or deal with unforeseen problems as they arise could also be included. For example, clearly defined curriculum implementation processes that work in that school would be described. Such information could be used as a guide for other principals who would like to establish effective strategies in their schools.

In the previous section, the researcher also recommended that principals promote collaboration among teachers in order to alleviate some of their apparent fears regarding their expertise in implementing new or revised curricula. Case studies could be conducted on the ways in which principals encourage people to work together and what actually happens when collaboration occurs. Such studies may provide information on ways principals lay the groundwork for collaboration, as well as such practical concerns as setting necessary timelines and release time.

In conclusion, considering the thesis as a whole, the role of the principal in curriculum implementation involves more than responding to curriculum problems as they arise. As instructional leaders, principals take action by establishing a vision for their schools which guides the planning of the schools' goals and objectives. Along with promoting a positive atmosphere, principals encourage teachers to collaborate on a clearly defined process which facilitates smooth curriculum implementation.

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APPENDIX A

Principal Interview Guide

Introduction:

Name: Lillian Sabo

Background: Graduate Student, Curriculum Studies, Elem. Ed., U of A.

Study: The role of the principal in curriculum implementation

Purpose: To talk to principals and teachers to find out what principals do that helps teachers implement curricula

Method: Permission to audiotape conversations
Names of schools and respondents confidential
Thank respondents for valuable time
Provide results of study to each respondent

Interview:

Research Question 4:

What factors operating within a school are related to the principal's role in curriculum implementation?

Lead-in: First, for the purposes of this study I define curriculum implementation as using the Alberta Education curriculum in the classroom. Since we are talking about curriculum implementation, we need to discuss if any factors within this school influence curriculum implementation.

A. Characteristics of the students:

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
1. How many students attend this school?	
2. Does your particular student population affect curriculum implementation in any way?	

B. Characteristics of the school staff:

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
1. How many full time classroom teachers teach at this school?	
2. Do you have any teachers on staff this year who have taught just for a year or two?	
3. What other staff members do you have that are not full time classroom teachers?	
4. Does the assistant principal help teachers with curriculum implementation in any way?	
5. Does the librarian help teachers with curriculum implementation in any way?	
6. Does the curriculum coordinator help teachers with curriculum implementation in any way?	

C. Description of principal:

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
1. How long have you been the principal of this school?	
2. Were you a principal before you came here?	
3. How did you prepare yourself for a principalship?	a) If as asst. prin., ask: As asst. pr. did you ever help teachers implem. curriculum? b) If in Post-grad. work, ask: Were there any courses that gave you ideas about how to help teachers with curriculum implementation?

Research Question 5:

Is there a relationship between principals' roles in curriculum implementation and their perceptions of their other roles?

Lead-in: As you have experienced, principals are required to fill several roles. I would like to talk about three roles in particular--instructional leadership, management and administration. I would like you to indicate how important each role is to you and how much time you are able to spend in each role--the two do not necessarily work together.

Define roles: (Written on separate cards):

Present one card at a time in the following asking the principal for another example of each role:

a. Instructional Leadership - the principal's role in facilitating the implementation of new or revised curricula to meet student needs.

Examples - planning for inservicing of teachers
- communicating goals to parents
- establishing ways of evaluating students and programs

b. Management - the principal's role in the allocation of educational resources.

Examples - establishing yearly priorities
- setting budgets for materials and/or personnel
- keeping track of how funds are spent

c. Administration - the principal's role in the smooth running of day-to-day school operations.

Examples - timetabling
- supervising (hallway, playground, etc.)
- disciplining students
- submitting routine reports (student enrollments)

Present "Principal's Roles" form.

Ask principals to fill out the form as follows:

Degree of Importance/Time Spent:

--with 1 being "low" and 5 being "high" ask the principal to circle the number which closely represents:

a. how important the principal believes each role is

b. the amount of time the principal spends performing each role

Follow-up questions:

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
1. The way I interpret (each role) is you believe that it is (very important, important, not very important) but you	i) For each role ask: a) What tasks are involved here?

spend (very little, some, a great deal) of time performing this role, is that right?

b) Why do they take so much/so little time?

c) How do you feel about the amount of time you spend in (role most time spent)?

2. From this then would you say that your priority, as a school principal, is _____?

Research Question 1:

What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that principals perceive as effective?

Lead-in: Alberta Education has revised the music, health and social studies curricula within the last 2 or 3 years. It is customary for teachers to have problems with implementing new or revised curricula and principals are sometimes able to help teachers with these problems. Now I would like to talk about some of the problems teachers have with implementation and the ways you have helped them.

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions

1. I would like you to think about a time when you believe you were very helpful to an individual teacher or group of teachers who were having problems with implementing a new or revised curriculum.
(Allow think time):

(Before you begin I would like to walk through this first description with you, i.e., question-by-question)

a. What problem did the teacher(s) have?

b. How did you know there was a problem?

(Research Question 1 cont'd)

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
c. Why do you think (s)he was having that problem?	i) Was this teacher new or experienced? ii) Was the problem in a subject of this teacher's expertise?
d. What did you do to help?	
e. Why did you choose to help in that way?	i) If teacher new, ask: Suppose an experienced teacher had the same problem would you help in the same way? ii) If teacher experienced, ask: Suppose a new teacher had the same problem would you help in the same way? iii) Suppose a Grade __ teacher had the same problem would you help in the same way? iv) Suppose another grade ___ teacher had the same problem would you help in the same way? v) If teachers have help from other support staff, ask: a) Why did you choose to help teachers with this problem rather than delegate?
f. How did the teacher(s) respond?	i) If all teachers helped, ask: a) Did any of the teachers require further help?

b) How did you know?
c) What other help did they receive?

g. Was the problem solved?

h. Why do you believe that kind of help worked?

i. Would you use that same kind of help with other teachers/another curriculum/an individual teacher?

i) Why/why not?

Summarize the incident and ask the principal what (s)he thinks influences curriculum implementation (e.g., combined classrooms, teacher specialty).

2. Now think of another time when you believe you were very helpful to a teacher or group of teachers who were having implementation problems, but you were helpful in a different way (Allow think time):

a. What problem did the teacher have?

b. How did you know there was a problem?

c. Why do you think (s)he had had that problem?

i) Was this teacher new or experienced?

ii) Was the problem in a subject of this teacher's specialty?

d. What did you do to help?

e. Why did you choose to help in that way?

i) If teacher new, ask: Suppose an experienced teacher had the same problem would you help in the same way?

(Research Question 1 cont'd)

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
	ii) If teacher experienced, ask: Suppose a new teacher had the same problem would you help in the same way?
	iii) Suppose a Grade __ teacher had the same problem would you help in the same way?
	iv) Suppose another grade ___ had the same problem would you help in the same way?
	v) If teachers have help from other support staff, ask: a) Why did you choose to help teachers with this problem rather than delegate?
f. How did the teacher(s) respond?	i) If all teachers helped, ask: a) Did any of the teachers require further help? b) How did you know? c) What other help did they receive?
g. Was the problem solved?	
h. Why do you believe that kind of help worked?	
i. Would you use that same kind of help with other teachers?	i) Why/why not?

Summarize the incident and ask the principal what (s)he thinks influences curriculum implementation (e.g., combined classrooms, teacher specialty).

Use if are several support staff (curriculum coordinator): You have a number of people (list those indicated previously) helping teachers. Would you help differently if you didn't have?

3. Tie in to Research Question 5:

Earlier in our discussion you indicated that your priority, as a school principal, was _____. How does that influence the ways in which you help teachers with curriculum implementation?

CONCLUSION

Maintain one hour time limit
Will return the results of the study to individual
Thank respondent for contributing time

APPENDIX B

Teacher Interview Guide

Introduction:

Name: Lillian Sabo

Background: Graduate Student. Curriculum Studies. Elem. Ed., U of A.

Study: The role of the principal in curriculum implementation

Purpose: To talk to principals and teachers to find out what principals do that helps teachers implement curricula

Method: Permission to audiotape conversations
Names of schools and respondents confidential
Thank respondents for valuable time
Provide results of study to each respondent

Interview:

Background Information:

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
1. What grade are you teaching?	
2. How long have you been teaching at this school?	
3. Did you have any teaching experience before you came here?	
4. How did you prepare yourself to teach this grade level?	

Research Question 2:

What assistance with implementation do principals give to teachers that teachers perceive as effective?

Lead-in: Alberta Education has revised the music, health and social studies curricula within the last 2 or 3 years. It is customary for teachers to have problems with implementing new or revised curricula and principals are sometimes able to help teachers with these problems. Now I would like to talk about how your principal has helped you with curriculum implementation.

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
1. I would like you to think about a time when you believe that the principal was very helpful to you when you were having problems with implementing a new or revised curriculum (Allow think time):	
(I would like to walk through this first description with you, i.e., specific questions set up)	
a. What problem were you having?	
b. Why do you think you were having that problem?	i) Was the problem in a subject of your specialty?
c. How did the principal know you were having a problem?	
d. What did the principal do to help?	*Note: If principal does not provide help, refer to Appendix E.
e. Why do you think the principal chose to help in that way?	i) If teacher new, ask: Suppose an experienced teacher had the same problem do you think the principal would help that teacher in the same way?

(Research Question 2 cont'd)

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
	ii) If teacher experienced, ask: Suppose a new teacher had the same problem do you think the principal would help in the same way?
	iii) Suppose a Grade __ teacher had the same problem do you think the principal would help in the same way?
	iv) Suppose another Grade __ teacher had the same problem do you think the principal would help in the same way?

f. How did you respond?

g. Was the problem solved?

h. Why do you believe that kind of help worked?

i. Could the principal have helped you in a more effective way?

Summarize the incident and ask the teacher what (s) he thinks influences curriculum implementation (e.g., combined classrooms, teacher specialty).

**Note: If principal does not help, request another critical incident following the format of Appendix E.

2. Now think of another time when you believe the principal was very helpful to a you when you were having problems implementing another curriculum (Allow think time):

(Research Question 2 cont'd)

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
a. What problem were you having?	
b. Why do you think you were having that problem?	i) Was the problem in a subject of your specialty?
c. How did the principal know you were having a problem?	
d. What did the principal do to help?	
e. Why do you think the principal chose to help in that way?	i) If teacher new, ask: Suppose an experienced teacher had the same problem do you think the principal would help that teacher in the same way? ii) If teacher experienced, ask: Suppose a new teacher had the same problem do you think the principal would help in the same way? iii) Suppose a Grade__teacher had the same problem do you think the principal would help in the same way? iv) Suppose another Grade __ teacher had the same problem do you think the principal would help in the same way?
f. How did you respond?	
g. Was the problem solved?	

(Research Question 2 cont'd)

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
h. Why do you believe that kind of help worked?	
i. Could the principal have helped you in a more effective way?	
Summarize the incident and ask the teacher what (s) he thinks influences curriculum implementation (e.g., combined classrooms,teacher specialty).	

Research Question 5:

Is there a relationship between principals' roles in curriculum implementation and their perceptions of their other roles?

Lead-in: Principals are required to fill several roles. I would like to talk about three roles in particular--instructional leadership, management and administration. I would like you to indicate how important you believe each role is to your principal and how much time you believe the principal spends in each role--the two do not necessarily work together.

Define roles: (Written on separate cards):

Present one card at a time in the following asking the teacher for another example of each role:

a. Instructional Leadership - the principal's role in facilitating the implementation of new or revised curriculum to meet student needs.

Examples - planning for inservicing of teachers
- communicating goals to parents
- establishing ways of evaluating students and programs

b. Management - the principal's role in the allocation of educational resources.

Examples - establishing yearly priorities
- setting budgets for materials and/or personnel
- keeping track of how funds are spent

c. Administration - the principal's role in the smooth running of day-to-day school operations.

Examples - timetabling
- supervising (hallway, playground, etc.)
- disciplining students
- submitting routine reports (student enrollments)

Present "Principal's Roles" form.

Ask teachers to fill out the form as follows:

Degree of Importance/Time Spent:

--with 1 being "low" and 5 being "high" ask the teacher to circle the number which closely represents:

a. how important the teacher believes each role is to the principal

b. the amount of time the teacher believes the principal spends performing each role

Follow-up questions:

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
1. The way I interpret (each role) is you believe that to the principal it is (very important, important, not very important) and you believe the principal spends (very little, some, a great deal) of time performing this role, is that right?	i) For each role, ask: a) What tasks are involved here? b) Why do they take so much/not as much time?
2. How do you feel about the principal spending this amount of time on (role where most time spent)?	

(Research Question 5 cont'd)

Major Interview Questions	Probing Questions
3. From this then you would say that the principal's priority is _____?	
4. Tie in to Research Question 2: You believe that the principal's priority, as a school principal, was _____. How does that influence the ways in which the principal helps teachers with curriculum implementation?	
CONCLUSION	Maintain one hour time limit Will return the results of the study to individual Thank respondent for contributing time

Role Definition Cards

Card 1:

Instructional Leadership

-- the principal's role in facilitating the implementation of new or revised curricula to meet student needs.

Examples -- planning for inservicing of teachers
-- communicating goals to parents
-- establishing ways of evaluating students and programs

Card 2:

Management

-- the principal's role in the allocation of educational resources

Examples -- establishing yearly priorities
-- setting budgets for materials and/or personnel
-- keeping track of how funds are spent

Card 3:

Administration

-- the principal's role in the smooth running of day-to-day school operations

Examples -- timetabling
-- supervising (hallway, playground, etc.)
-- disciplining students
-- submitting routine reports (student enrollments)

APPENDIX D

Degree of Importance/Time Spent

	Degree of Importance					Time Spent				
	low				high	low				high
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
ADMINISTRATION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX E

Alternate Questions for Teachers

These questions to be used when a teacher indicates that the principal did not directly or indirectly help with curriculum implementation:

Purpose: to discover how teachers get the help they need

1. Why do you think the principal doesn't help?

2. How does the principal expect you to solve the problems you have with curriculum implementation?

3. How do you solve the problem?

4. Was there any problem bypassing the principal?

5. What did (central office) do for you? Did you receive the help you really needed?

6. Could the principal have done that for you? (What would you have liked the principal to do?)